Arab Funding of American Universities:
Donors, Recipients, and Impact

By
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American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise
(May 2024)

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Executive Summary

Given the hostile environment toward Jews prevalent on campuses today, there is a valid concern that it might be fueled by Arab funding. Legitimate fears have also been raised about the broader impact of foreign donations on national security, research, and teaching. In response to those concerns, AICE has updated its landmark report, **Arab Funding of American Universities: Donors, Recipients, and Impact.**

This report documents the substantial sums contributed by donors from Arab states and the resulting pressure on universities to avoid teaching or research that might offend them. It also flags transparency issues and the potential influence of Arab governments on U.S. universities.

The Department of Education (DoE) has complicated assessment efforts by not clarifying fund usage, changing data from previous reports, misreporting information, and omitting certain donations. Consequently, evaluating the influence of Arab funding necessitates placing greater reliance on limited published data outside of DoE reports.

Given that caveat, the data published in early 2024 revealed that since 1981:

- Colleges and universities received almost **$55 billion** from foreign sources.
- **Nearly one-fourth – $13.1 billion – came from Arab individuals, institutions, and governments.**
- Three countries account for 83% of Arab funding: **Qatar ($6b)**, Saudi Arabia ($3.5b), and the UAE ($1.5b).
- Arab funders made 12,342 contributions to **288 institutions in 49 states** (excluding Alaska) and the District of Columbia.
- **Nearly three-fourths of the contributions, worth almost $10 billion (76% of the total), do not list their purpose.**
- Most donations with a description of their use are for financial assistance to the 31,000 students from Arab countries (most from Saudi Arabia).
- **Arab funding has grown significantly**, with nearly one-third of donations made since 2020.
- **Cornell is by far the largest beneficiary, with donations worth $2.1 billion**. Georgetown follows it with $934 million, Texas A&M with almost $910 million, and Carnegie Mellon with $900 million.
- **Due to lax compliance and enforcement,** billions of dollars in contributions were not reported to DoE.

The report also found that:

- Universities, traditionally seen as champions of free speech and critical thinking, accept funding from countries with poor human rights records and limited freedoms. This raises **concerns about potential compromises to academic freedom and institutional values**.
- Universities receiving Arab funding have faculty who are **apologists for radical Islam and vitriolic critics of Israel who support the anti-Semitic Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement**.
- Arab funding provokes worries about the education of **future decision-makers**, such as those attending elite universities and prestige institutes, and how it might influence U.S. policy.
- Arab states are primarily motivated to support universities to **enhance their image, train their citizens, and discourage criticism of Islam** rather than disparage Israel or Jews.
- It is challenging to determine whether Arab funding influences faculty or whether it flows to faculty whose views are already compatible with the donors.

The report recommends that to address these concerns, DoE should:

1. **Establish clear guidelines for foreign funding, ensuring national security and academic freedom are protected.**
2. **Require universities to report the names of donors and the purpose of all foreign funding, including previously unreported donations, and make this information available to the public.**
3. **Investigate the impact of Arab funding on teaching, curricula, faculty hiring, outreach programs, academic freedom, and national security.**

The Problem: Lack of Transparency

The primary aim of this paper is not to vilify Arab funding sources but instead to advocate for transparency measures to safeguard academic integrity, foster a healthy exchange of ideas, and ensure that funding is not used to sway research agendas, curriculum development, and faculty recruitment. Additionally, there is a growing concern regarding the potential impact of faculty members' personal views on Middle East issues and the possibility that these perspectives are influenced or incentivized by Arab funders.

Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 mandates that universities report foreign gifts and contracts of $250,000 or more biannually. For years, universities paid scant attention to the obligation, and the Department of Education (DoE) failed to enforce it. Hence, we frequently only learn of contributions if the university publicizes them to announce a new program or faculty position.

Reports became more detailed starting in 2019-2020 when the department called for greater transparency. In 2020, the DoE began investigating whether universities complied with reporting requirements and rejected complaints that they were overly burdensome. The department was incredulous, for example, that Yale reported no foreign gifts or contracts for four years and Case Western Reserve for 12. It noted that institutions can easily track money paid by students and, therefore, should be able to trace the sources of foreign funds.

The Trump administration's DoE found that foreign sources hostile to the United States were "targeting their investments to project soft power, steal sensitive and proprietary research, and spread propaganda." It highlighted the lack of institutional controls to manage the risk "that foreign money buys influence or control over teaching and research." The department expressed particular unease about anonymous donations from China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Russia.[1]

The DoE under the Biden administration has yielded to university requests, withholding specific donor details. This significantly weakens transparency.[2] Currently, we only know the originating country and, in a handful of instances, whether the money comes from a university, oil company, or cultural or educational ministry.

The DoE has obfuscated the threats of foreign funding and made it difficult to assess the impact by deleting dates, altering previous reports, misreporting information, and erasing some donations altogether. We need a clear view of foreign funding sources and their purpose to ensure universities remain bastions of free inquiry untainted by the biases of funders.

History

As documented in *The Arab Lobby*,[3] Middle Eastern governments understood that American universities would be helpful in training specialists who would appreciate their point of view and could work directly and indirectly on its behalf. "The rulers of the Arab oil states are neither simple philanthropists nor disinterested patrons," former English diplomat John Kelly observed. "They expect a return upon their donations to institutions of learning and their subsidies to publishing houses; whether it be in the form of subtle propaganda on behalf of Arab or Islamic causes, or the preferential admission of their nationals, however unqualified ... or the publication of the kind of sycophantic flim-flam about themselves and their countries which now clutters sections of the Western press and even respectable periodical literature."[4]

Colonel William Eddy, a former intelligence operative, Aramco adviser, and State Department representative to Saudi Arabia, reported that Aramco began funding programs as early as the 1950s. In 1956, he wrote to his son, "ARAMCO contributes to institutions like Princeton, the Middle East Institute, at [sic] Washington, and the American University of Beirut not only because these centers prepare future employees, but because they also equip men to come out to the Near East in the Foreign Service, or in teaching or in other capacities, which strengthens the small band of Americans who know the Arabs and understand them."[5]

The Gulf Arab leaders, in particular, wanted Americans to see them as more than greedy autocrats controlling the world's oil spigot. As Abdulhamid Sabra, the Harvard chair of the history of Islamic science, explained: "The Arab nations know they have a stake in American education. They are not well enough understood, and they know it will benefit them when Americans know more about them than how many barrels of oil are being imported, and what it costs."[6]

The first donation to an American educational institution appears to have been made in 1969 to tiny Ricker College in Houlton, Maine, which closed in the mid-1970s. It received funding from King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, the government of Kuwait, and Aramco to support the first undergraduate program on the Muslim world in the United States and offer academic credit to students spending their junior year abroad at a college in a Muslim country.

As early as 1976, Arab governments and individuals began making significant gifts to universities to create chairs and centers in Arab, Middle Eastern, and Islamic studies. More than 90 universities sought assistance from Saudi Arabia, but the first endowment was created at USC with $1 million. Though universities usually jealously guard their prerogatives to choose their faculty and typically refuse to allow donors a say in hiring, Saudi donors were allowed to approve the appointment of the King Faisal Chair in Islamic Studies. Willard Beling, an international relations professor who had worked for Aramco, was given the position. USC president John Hubbard, whose office had a photo of himself with Saudi King Khalid, claimed in a 1978 interview that the Saudis had moderated their oil policy "because of the USC connection."[7]

Investigative journalist Steven Emerson suggested that the choice of USC as the first recipient of Saudi aid might have been related to the fact that many Saudis attended the school, including future ministers of industry, commerce, and planning. Later, gifts were often made to universities because Arab donors attended them.

The May/June 1979 issue of *ARAMCO World*, the publication of the Saudi oil conglomerate, noted, "When a bank draft arrives from an Arab country to help finance a U.S. university program, or help to fund its scholarship needs, there is little publicity given to the gift although it is invariably received with quiet rejoicing." The publication listed several donations that had been made by that date and before the period covered by DoE reports:[8]

- Kuwaiti businessman Faisal al-Marzook donated $250,000 to the University of Hartford to construct the playing fields named for his father.
- Kuwait donated $1 million to endow a medical chair at St. Luke's Hospital, an affiliate of Columbia University.
- Saudi Arabia gave $200,000 to Duke University for an Islamic and Arabian development studies program.
- Sultan Qabus of Oman gave $100,000 each to the Universities of Pennsylvania and Georgetown and to Johns Hopkins SAIS to develop Arab studies programs and $25,000 for the appointment of a professor of Near Eastern science at New York University.
- Libya contributed $750,000 for the al-Mukhtar Chair of Arab Culture at Georgetown University and $88,000 to help fund an interdisciplinary program on Arab development at the University of Utah.
- The United Arab Emirates donated $250,000 to support a visiting professorship of Arab civilization at Georgetown University.
- Kuwait endowed the only chair in the history of Islamic science in the world at that time at Harvard University.

- Two-thirds of the funding for Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies was contributed by a group of Arab countries. The center's board of advisors includes representatives from Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

In 1980, the UAE gave Georgetown $750,000 to endow a chair in Arab studies. Georgetown's president, Rev. Timothy Healy, said the gift would "help to continue the slow growth of understanding and the work of peace about which all of us at Georgetown care."[9]

In 1982, the Saudi royal family gave $600,000 to preserve photographs of Middle Eastern life at the Semitic Museum. This was the largest single donation to the project. After questions were raised about the source of funding, Assistant Curator for Archives Ingeborg O'Reilly said, "We would never be able to accept a gift with strings or conditions attached to it" and that "in this case, there were no strings and no conflict of interest at all."[10]

Since that time, donors from Arab states have quietly made contributions to American universities to create more centers and chairs to propagate their views. The Arab lobby succeeded in gaining significant influence on the field of Middle East Studies and now has faculty across the country who use their positions to advance political agendas that are typically pro-Arab (often focused on the Palestinians), anti-Israel, and uncritical of radical Islam. Saudi Arabia, for example, hopes "to encourage and develop communication between Islamic culture and other cultures, to encourage greater understanding of the true nature of Islam by clearly explaining the beliefs of Muslims and correcting false conceptions and caricatures, and to show that Islam welcomes knowledge with enthusiasm."[11]

Universities have been willing enablers. College presidents, whose jobs depend more on their fundraising success than their ability to educate students, see dollar signs when they look to the Middle East and have been prospecting for petrodollars for decades.

Not all foreign gifts are overtly political; however, universities understand that substantial amounts of money are available to institutions that do not antagonize Arab donors.

How Big are the Incentives?

According to the DoE, between 1981 and February 13, 2024, colleges and universities received nearly **$55 billion from foreign sources, and nearly one-fourth – $13,147,052,158 – came from Arab individuals, institutions, and governments from 14 countries and the Palestinian Authority.**[12] This represented a 16% increase ($1.7 billion) from the prior year.

When *The Arab Lobby* was published in 2010, the DoE had reported that between 1986 and 2007, donors from Arab countries made more than 100 contributions worth more than $320 million to American universities. Most of the funding came after 9/11 as Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia, looked to improve their image in the United States. Nearly half of the gifts in the report came from Saudi sources. By far the largest donation on the list, almost $85 million, was a contract between Qatar and Carnegie-Mellon for a council for information and technology. I noted in the book that the list likely represented only a fraction of the actual gifts.

According to the February 6, 2024, DoE report**, 288 institutions in 49 states (missing Alaska) and the District of Columbia received 12,342 contributions, an increase of 12% from April 2023.** Of those, 7,356 were unrestricted contracts worth $8,693,108,126; 2,940 were restricted contracts worth $2,941,781,266; 1,551 were unrestricted gifts worth $1,233,235,498; and 495 were restricted gifts totaling $278,927,268.

Data from prior reports was missing in the October 2023 report. For example, it erased 55 grants from Jordan and all 23 contributions from the Palestinian Authority (PA). The PA donations were misreported as coming

from England and Panama. Some information, such as the inclusion of the PA funds, was corrected in the February 2024 report.

While universities are only required to report donations of $250,000 or more, 7,425 contributions under that amount appear in the report. Some are as little as one dollar, and it seems odd that Arab funders gave such trivial amounts and that universities bothered to report them.

Until 2020, the DoE listed the country of the giftor but not whether a government source was the funder. Unless the university reported the donor, the gifts could come from individuals, companies, foundations, or other sources within the country. In the latest report, 5,337 donations (43%) were from government sources, 1,835 (15%) were not, and for 5,170 (44%) contributions worth nearly $6.8 billion (52% of the total), there was no information as to whether they came from a government source.

Who are the Funders?

Three countries contributed 83% of all Arab funding. Qatar is by far the leading source – 1,143 donations worth nearly $6 billion (45% of the total). Much of this money is funneled through the "Qatar Foundation — founded in 1995 by then-Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and his wife Sheikha Moza bint Nasser to "realize their ambitions for the future of Qatar.'" Nasser, the mother of the current Emir, is the foundation's chair.

The next most profligate spenders are Saudi Arabia, with 7,028 donations worth $3.5 billion (27% of the total), and the UAE, with 1,440 donations worth almost $1.5 billion (11% of the total). If Kuwait (1,517 donations worth $1.4 billion) is included, **the top four donors comprise 94% of Arab giving and 23% of all university donations**.

Table 1: Sources of Funding by Country

	Donations	Amount	Largest	Recipient
Qatar	1,143	$5,964,810,011	$154,974,110	Cornell University
Saudi Arabia	7,028	$3,521,736,186	$91,525,287	Georgia State
UAE	1,440	$1,486,239,719	$75,000,000	University of Texas MD Anderson
Kuwait	1,517	$1,358,052,910	$284,318,526	University of Missouri Kansas City
Oman	765	$372,555,955	$138,964,576	Washington State University
Egypt	130	$144,572,088	$31,831,520	Harvard University
Bahrain	63	$99,180,550	$25,770,000	Calif. State University Northridge
Jordan	87	$60,895,944	$25,175,000	UCLA
Iraq	43	$51,749,040	$39,108,635	University of Arkansas
Morocco	29	$37,082,965	$10,000,000	MIT
Lebanon	54	$27,672,418	$2,500,000	Harvard University
Palestinian Authority	24	$11,618,000	$900,000	Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Libya	11	$7,247,030	$2,210,000	Tufts University
Syria	5	$2,605,641	$1,240,939	University of South Florida
Tunisia	3	$1,033,701	$574,650	Harvard University
Total	**12,342**	**13,147,052,158**		

The largest donation ever made was $248 million from the Embassy of Kuwait to the University of Missouri Kansas City in 2023. Oman made a $139 million contribution to Washington State. Of the 15 largest donations, the other 13 were from Qatar. The largest Qatari donation, new in 2024, was nearly $160 million.

While it is unsurprising that the wealthy Gulf countries contributed the lion's share of the contributions, it is startling that Egypt was the sixth largest donor, given its economic problems.

"Palestine"

The DoE did not assign any money to the Palestinian Authority in the October 2023 report. It previously attributed 19 donations to the non-existent "State of Palestine," which our last report noted was troubling because it conflicted with U.S. policy, which recognizes no such state. That report used the no less inaccurate "Palestinian Territory, Occupied" for the other four contributions. The correct attribution would be to the disputed territory or, better still, the Palestinian Authority.

The February 2024 report now lists 24 donations worth $11,618,000, all from "Palestinian territories." This still is a problematic characterization as the area is undefined. Is it the area controlled by the PA or is it the entire West Bank and East Jerusalem? If the latter, that would mean the DoE has unilaterally decided territory that is disputed, some of which (e.g., consensus settlements) will be part of Israel in any peace agreement, belongs to the Palestinians.

It is unlikely that money came from the areas under Israeli control, and though the information is not in the report, at least two of the donations came from a foundation in Nablus, which is part of the PA. A previous report said Brown received two gifts of $643,000 in 2020 to support a professorship in Palestinian Studies within Middle East Studies. The October 2023 report seemed to misattribute those contributions to Panama. The current one corrected this and reassigned it to the PA but deleted the second donation, which may have been a duplicate entry or erroneously omitted.

In the latest filing, England is still listed as making two donations for the professorship on the same day of $271,876. This entry could be a duplicate and might be mistaken for a PA donor. The UAE also gave two gifts of $67,969 for the position on the same day. DoE never identified the donors of the professorship, but an official from Brown acknowledged the Palestinian contributor was the Munib and Angela Masri Foundation.[13]

Harvard received gifts that previously were listed as originating in the "State of Palestine" in 2017 ($275,000), 2018 ($775,000), and 2019 ($525,000). The university did not report the purpose of the gifts, and Harvard did not respond to requests for an explanation or disclose the donor's name.

The other 20 contracts, (four previously recorded as from "Palestinian Territory, Occupied") worth $9.4 million, were signed with Indiana University of Pennsylvania. It seems an odd choice of universities to support. The funds did not come from the government so they may be a private individual who has some connection to the school. Six had no purpose listed; the rest were for financial aid for students from Palestine/West Bank – another odd designation that suggests they are separate places. Five entries may be mistakes, attributing them to expenses for students from India. There is no way to know from the report if the purpose or the source of the donation is incorrect.

The rest of the contracts, worth $3.9 million, cover tuition, expenses, and fees for students from "Palestine." Previous reports attributed tuition contracts to the Arab American University, Ramallah. Nine of the donations do not have information as to whether the money came from a government source.

According to the report, no money came from the Palestinian Authority itself. If any did, that would be a scandal given that the PA relies on foreign aid to subsist. Palestinians would rightly wonder why their money was being spent in the United States; American taxpayers might ask why they are subsidizing the PA with aid when they have money to spend here.

Funding Has Increased Dramatically

In the last year, Qatar donated $527 million, an increase of 10%, Saudi Arabia $400 million (up 13%), the UAE $108 million (up 8%). Kuwait made a huge increase in its contributions, giving $422 million, an increase of 45%.

Overall, funding has risen dramatically in the last decade. Nearly 70% of all donations were made in that period and one-third since 2020.

Figure 1: Funding By Year

Which Universities Benefit the Most?

The Arab states have directed about one-fifth (19% worth $2.5 billion) of their funding to Ivy League universities. Cornell is by far the largest beneficiary of any university, with 152 transactions worth more than $2.1 billion. Harvard is among the top recipients, raking in more than $258 million. It is surprising, if not suspicious, that Yale only reported 26 donations worth $19 million, and Princeton only reported four contributions for a total of less than $2 million.

As Table 2 below shows, besides Cornell, the largest cumulative donations went to Georgetown with $934 million, Texas A&M with almost $910 million, and Carnegie Mellon with $900 million. George Washington University received the most gifts, 1,225. The top five universities received 42% of all donations, and the top 12 received 59% of the funds.

What is Being Funded?

Until 2020, the DoE did not report how universities used foreign gifts; even now, most are unexplained. **Nearly three-fourths (8,958) of the contributions, worth almost $10 billion (76% of all Arab funding), have no description**. A total of 3,379 (27%) list a purpose. These donations total $3.2 billion. Out of 101 contributions from Qatar, only a fraction specifies their purpose, leaving us in the dark regarding the expenditure of over 90% of the largest Arab funder's $4.6 billion worth of contributions.

The descriptions that are provided are not always clear, but at least 2,997 (89%), totaling $3 billion, were for tuition, fees, scholarships, or other financial aid; the rest were for various uses, including unspecified research activity. Some 162 contributions were research related worth about $290 million.

Table 2: Top 12 Recipients of Funding From Arab Sources

Institution	Donations	Value
Cornell University	152	$2,121,636,374
Georgetown University	96	$933,907,838
Texas A&M University	384	$909,867,075
Carnegie Mellon University	54	$900,338,663
Northwestern University	125	$714,794,239
University of Colorado Boulder*	400	$507,784,204
Virginia Commonwealth University	65	$324,833,327
University of Missouri**	148	$306,408,971
Pennsylvania State University	199	$304,056,229
Harvard University	209	$258,277,419
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	153	$247,371,940
George Washington University	1,225	$232,613,587

*Total including Colorado Springs and Denver campuses – 541 donations for $655 million.
**Most of the total was from one donation of $284 million.

The largest donation ever, more than $284 million, was for Kuwaiti students to attend the University of Missouri Kansas City. The next four largest, ranging from $149 to $160 million, were contributed to Cornell for the Weill Cornell Medicine program in Qatar. Oman gave $139 million to Washington State University to support Omani students. The remaining 14 of the top 20 donations were from Qatar. Saudi Arabia's largest gift was $92 million to Georgia State for an unknown purpose.

From 2012 to 2019, Qatar signed contracts with Cornell each year for the peculiar amount of $99,999,999. Other significant transactions included ones from the government-associated Qatar Foundation for $99, $95, $88, and $83 million to Texas A&M for its program in Qatar and $84 million and $77 million to Carnegie Mellon for an unspecified purpose.

Only two donations with a clear political purpose were identified in the latest report. Both were from the UAE on the same date and for the same amount ($67,969) for a professorship in Palestinian Studies at Brown University. A prior report only listed one of these donations, so this may be a duplication error.

Qatar gave $500,000 in 2022 for the "North Africa Initiative" at Johns Hopkins, but whether this was for a political program is unclear.

The acknowledgment of foreign donors and the purpose of their gifts has typically been disclosed only if universities decide to announce them to publicize a new program or professorship, or if the press discovers them in some other way. Specific descriptions of gifts in this report are derived from these sources.

Table 3: **Fifteen Largest Donations**

Recipient	Donor	Amount	Purpose
University of Missouri Kansas City	Kuwait	$284,318,526	Tuition
Cornell University	Qatar	$154,974,110	Weill Cornell Medicine/Qatar
Cornell University	Qatar	$151,000,000	Weill Cornell Medicine/Qatar
Cornell University	Qatar	$148,864,293	Weill Cornell Medicine/Qatar
Washington State University	Oman	$138,964,576	Weill Cornell Medicine/Qatar
Cornell University	Qatar	$137,255,000	Weill Cornell Medicine/Qatar
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Cornell University	Qatar	$99,999,999	None listed
Texas A and M University	Qatar	$99,022,925	Qatar Campus

Cashing In On Foreign Campuses

In addition to fishing for money in the Gulf and offering to set up new departments of Middle East, Arab, and Islamic studies if given the resources, universities have also sought lucrative deals with Gulf states to fund branches of their campuses in the Middle East. This is not entirely new since the American University in Beirut was established in 1866. This trend raises concerns about potential limitations on academic freedom.

One of the most heavily publicized examples is New York University, whose president, John Sexton, was referred to as the "Emir of NYU" in a *New York* magazine article about accepting a "blank check" to become the first university to open an American liberal arts college functioning as an equal with the home campus in the UAE. According to the article, Abu Dhabi committed $50 million to the program and agreed to finance the Middle East campus and parts of the New York campus.[14]

Years later, faculty remained angry about Sexton's actions. "It was negotiated secretly and announced to the rest of us with only a veneer of serious faculty consultation," said one professor, "but we knew it was a fait accompli." Others expressed concerns about academic freedom and diluting NYU's brand.[15]

The latest report does not specify how NYU has used any contributions, so we don't know how much was related to the Abu Dhabi campus. NYU has received more than $178 million (of its $202 million in Arab contributions) from the UAE, making the relationship financially lucrative.

Today, more than a dozen universities and affiliate programs have established campuses in Qatar, the UAE, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia.

Sharjah, UAE

American University has a partnership arrangement with AU Sharjah, founded in 1997. AU reported only one contract in 2005 for $2,232,417, which raises the question of how much it received for the other 18+ years the

campus has been open. If $2.2 million is the budget for one year, the total unreported income could be more than $40 million.[16]

Al Ain, UAE

In 2006, Johns Hopkins Medicine International signed a 10-year management contract (amended in 2010 to management services) with Abu Dhabi Health Services Company (SEHA) for services at Tawam Hospital.[17] No funding associated with the program was reported.

Abu Dhabi, UAE

Johns Hopkins Medicine International signed a management agreement in 2008 with Al Rahba Hospital.[18] No funding identified with the program was reported.

The MIT & Masdar Institute Cooperative Program was a collaborative project with Abu Dhabi in which MIT provided advice and guidance to the Masdar Institute. The program ran from 2006 until May 2018. No funding identified with the program was reported.[19]

Dubai, UAE

Boston University Institute of Dental Research and Education opened in Dubai in 2008. No funding identified with the program was reported.

In 2006, the Dubai Harvard Foundation for Medical Research was created with the support of the ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Among the founders was Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Al Saud, who created a medical and biomedical research fellowship. The chair of the board is the dean of Harvard Medical School. The foundation "supports cutting-edge collaborative research and seeks to establish sustainable research and education programs focused on diseases relevant to the population in the broader Middle East region."[20] No funding identified with the program was reported.

In 2015, Harvard Medical School opened a global health center in Dubai. No funding identified explicitly with the program was reported to DoE, but a $3 million gift and $490,000 contract from the UAE were disclosed.

Michigan State opened a campus in Dubai in 2008 and was forced to close it in 2010 because it was losing too much money. The funding from the UAE was unreported.

Rochester Institute of Technology opened its Dubai campus in 2008. RIT announced it would build a $136 million 30-acre campus funded by the UAE government.[21] In a past report, DoE listed three contributions worth more than $19 million for academic programs with RIT Dubai FZE and the Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority. The October 2023 report has that amount for UAE contributions, but the purpose was deleted. The April 2024 report listed three donations for the RIT Dubai program worth $19.5 million.

Ras al Khaymah, UAE

George Mason was one of the first institutions to launch a campus in the UAE. It opened in 2005 but closed in 2009 without graduating a single student.[22] It was funded by a government-supported foundation known as the RAK Education Company (Edrak), which cut its support by roughly half and made it untenable for the campus to remain open.[23] GMU did report funding it received for the campus – $2,243,016 over four years – which suggests how much the other universities are *not* reporting.

Lebanon

Johns Hopkins Medicine International and Clemenceau Medical Center began an affiliation agreement in 2002 to offer consultation for designing and developing the hospital, which opened in 2006. The deal has been extended to 2026.[24] No funding identified with the program was reported.

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Johns Hopkins Medicine signed an affiliation agreement with the King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital (KKESH).[25] No funding identified with the program was reported.

Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

Johns Hopkins Aramco Healthcare is a joint venture between Saudi Aramco and Johns Hopkins Medicine that began in 2014 with a term of 10 years. Johns Hopkins owns 20% of the joint venture.[26] No funding identified with the program was reported.

It is possible that some of the funding for these programs in foreign countries was reported to DoE without attributing it to these campuses (a significant flaw in the reporting requirement), but that seems doubtful given the amounts reported during their years of operation. Since the budgets of overseas campuses are in the millions of dollars, and ISGAP identified more than $3 billion in unreported funds for campuses in Qatar alone, tens of millions have likely gone undisclosed by universities with satellites in other countries.

Qatar Campuses Become Controversial

Qatar is a funder and supporter of terrorist groups – Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood – and the home of the rabidly anti-Israel, anti-American *Al Jazeera* television network.[27] It became a focus of news coverage after the October 7, 2023 Hamas massacre because of its relationship with the organization and its involvement in hostage negotiations. Qatar has also heavily invested in establishing American university campuses in Doha.

"Qatar's goal is not to promote anti-Semitic or pro-Palestinian messages," noted Gulf expert Ariel Admoni, "but anti-Semitism and pro-Palestinian sentiments are byproducts of policies convenient for them." He added, "In Western countries, particularly within educated circles, the pro-Palestinian struggle is perceived as a 'convenient' cause. Consequently, from the Qatari perspective, this portrayal positions them favorably on what they consider to be the right side of public opinion, especially among the youth."[28]

The first sign that Qatar might have become radioactive was Texas A&M's announcement in February 2024 that it was closing its program in Qatar after 21 years and just three years after renewing a 10-year contract. To that point, the DoE recorded seven contributions worth almost $105 million. According to the *Washington Post*, the previous contract was worth more than $750 million, so the decision was costly. The public reason given was regional instability and changing institutional priorities; however, some believed it was related to a report by ISGAP raising concerns about Qatari access to nuclear energy research.[29] The university disputed the findings when it came out and said "the misinformation campaign had no bearing" on the decision to leave Qatar, which had been under discussion before ISGAP published its report.[30]

The government-run Qatar Foundation, which contributed at least $386 million to the project, accused the board of reacting to a disinformation campaign to harm the foundation.[31] The Middle East Studies Association chimed in as well, accusing the university of responding to "political fears of U.S. campus politics" and the ISGAP report that MESA said contained "false, scurrilous and harmful accusations" against faculty members, though none were mentioned.[32]

In 2018, the editorial board of the *Georgetown Voice* called on the university to close its Qatar campus because it represented an endorsement of many government policies that "are antithetical to Georgetown's mission as a Jesuit institution." It singled out limits on the human rights of women and members of the LGBTQ community and its slave labor system. Concluding the financial cost should not be a deterrent to shutting the school, the board said, "The integrity of our school is at stake."[33]

Georgetown didn't act then and has given no indication it plans to follow Texas A&M's example now.

Northwestern also has a Doha campus. It has received eight contributions worth more than $173 million. It too has given no indication it plans to close its campus and its funding is supposed to last until at least 2028.

Universities do not have to end all relationships with foreign governments, but they could stop taking money from the worst human rights abusers. As the MIT students noted, their university does not have to worry about financial retaliation. "With an endowment of over $16 billion on which it managed to generate a staggering investment return of 13.5 percent in 2017, MIT cannot be threatened into silence."[34]

Not every university has those resources, and if MIT turns down Arab money, other universities will willingly take it.

Prestige Centers

Three of the most prestigious university centers have also been beneficiaries of foreign funding:

- The Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School.
- The James A Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University.
- The Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs at Brown University.

The DoE report provides no information on whether donations went to any of them, but we have other sources that raise questions about how Arab funds are used and if they influence research or curriculum.

The Center for International Policy, however, reported the Baker Institute received funding from Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.[35] DoE lists only two donations to Rice University, both from Qatar for unspecified purposes. The Institute website does not list donors, but one of the "Life Members" is Sheikh Abdulla bin Ali Al Thani of Qatar. The Institute's 2023 annual report lists revenue of $13.5 million but does not identify the amounts of donations. Donors listed include Aramco Services Company and endowments from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science, Qatar Fund for Development, and The State of Qatar Endowment for International Stem Cell Policy. Among the donors of programmatic gifts, which "allows fellows, scholars, and researchers to investigate current and new research areas and creates opportunities to engage undergraduate and graduate students in the research and policy recommendation processes," were the Qatar Fund for Development (Al Jazeera Media Network of Qatar was listed as a supporter in the 2022 report).[36]

Among the publications from the Institute were "Israel's Mass Displacement of Gazans Fits Strategy of Using Migration as a Tool of War." The report asserts that Israel has deliberately displaced the Gaza population in violation of international law when, in fact, the population was encouraged to move to avoid being in a battle zone after being used as shields by Hamas, which embedded itself within the civilian population.[37]

The Belfer Center does not include budget or donor information in its annual report. The Center for International Policy report listed Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE as donors.[38] Saudi Prince Turki bin Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud provided an undisclosed amount in 2017 for its Project on Saudi and Gulf Cooperation Council Security. "With Prince Turki's generous support, the Belfer Center is pleased to begin this project on the national security challenges that confront the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula. We hope to illuminate

this complex set of topics and help to develop ideas and recommendations for the United States and allies and partners in the region to address these critical issues," said Center Director Graham Allison.[39]

The Center announced a $6 million gift from the Kuwait Foundation in 2018 "to develop the next generation of leaders and scholars from Kuwait, the Gulf region, and the broader Middle East, and fund research on issues of vital importance in the region."[40] The gift does not appear in the DoE report.

The Center's 2022 annual report describes its Middle East Initiative "to strengthen the intellectual exchange between Harvard and the Middle East." That year, 13 Harvard students went to the UAE to deepen "students' understanding of the UAE's economy, social transformations, and governance." It also mentioned the 20th anniversary of its Kuwait Program, which hosted 50 Kuwaitis in an executive education program.[41] These are good examples of how Arab funders are interested in educating their citizens and improving their countries' images.

In a message to friends and colleagues, faculty chair of the initiative, Ford Foundation Professor Tarek Masoud, admitted growing up in Saudi Arabia and that his "nightmares were often populated by the Israeli soldiers I saw on the news." He says he has a greater understanding "that Israel is more than just an armed camp that daily heaps indignities upon Arabs," but admits "those early impressions remain powerful." He says when he befriends an Israeli, "part of my brain cannot help thinking about what they might have done to Palestinians." He expressed sympathy for the Israeli victims of October 7 and acknowledged Gazans are imprisoned by a "deranged mafia," but says they are also at the mercy of "a fearsome military power that lurks just over a high wall and that periodically rains fire upon them under the heartless euphemism of 'mowing the lawn.'" These comments were made as if Israel arbitrarily decided to bomb Gaza without provocation.[42]

A board member and Center affiliate is Stephen Walt, who is listed as a Middle East expert but is not. Walt became a favorite of Israel's detractors after co-authoring *The Israel Lobby*. The book is a polemic that shows the authors' ignorance of all aspects of Middle East history, politics, and the lobby. Among its most outrageous charges is that the U.S.-Israel relationship and Israeli policies contributed to the attacks on 9/11.

Another affiliate of the Center, Diane Moore, a lecturer in Religion, Conflict, and Peace at the Harvard Divinity School, is a Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) advocate and member of Harvard Faculty for Justice in Palestine.[43]

A New Directions in Palestinian Studies Program is within the Watson School, which focuses on Palestinians through the lens of "settler colonialism." At least nine members of the Walsh faculty signed a statement that acknowledged in one sentence "the horrific attacks by Hamas" and called for the release of all hostages. The rest of that paragraph and the seven that followed condemned Israel, speciously claiming "universities are under pressure to silence criticism of Israeli government actions and activism for Palestinian human rights by equating such speech with anti-Semitism."[44]

One program sponsored by Watson in 2022, featuring Visting Fellow in Palestine Studies Ruba Salih, highlighted the effort to link Palestinians' plight to unrelated American issues. The title was "Thinking Palestine via Ferguson and Standing Rock: Radical Kinship and the Intersectionality of Struggles."

The Director of Middle East Studies at Walsh, Nadje Al-Ali, describes herself as a "feminist activist academic."[45] She has signed statements accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza and the media of an anti-Palestinian bias.[46] Watson Faculty Fellow Omer Bartov also signed the genocide statement (Palestinian Studies professor Doumani also signed the media letter).

Senior fellow Stephen Kinzer inaccurately called Israel's 2014 Operation Protective Edge, prompted by an escalation of rocket fire by terrorists, an "invasion and occupation of Gaza." He also suggested that Democrats be asked at a debate about "the nearly 2 million citizens of Gaza [who] live under the world's harshest occupation," and are unable to "speak freely." A former *New York Times* correspondent who has no expertise in the Middle East, Kinzer is apparently unaware that Israel evacuated Gaza in 2005 and Hamas controls Palestinians' freedom to speak.[47]

Some 18 members of the Middle East Studies department within the Watson Center signed a letter that condemned the killing of Israelis and taking of hostages but primarily attacked Israel, falsely claimed critics of Israel were being silenced, and asked the administration to call for a ceasefire.[48]

Who Is Training Diplomats?

Perhaps the most prestigious place for current and aspiring diplomats to receive training is Georgetown's Walsh School of Foreign Service. Its founder, Roman Catholic priest Edmund Walsh, wanted to create a school to "prepare students for all major forms of foreign representation—whether commercial, financial, consular or diplomatic."

In its investigation of institutional compliance with reporting requirements, the DoE noted, "Prince Alwaleed's agreement with Georgetown exemplifies how foreign money can advance a particular country's worldview within U.S. academic institutions."[49] It's impossible to know what other donations have impacted Georgetown because no purpose is listed for any of the $900 million it has received from Arab sources.

Among the more than 150 faculty listed on the Walsh website is John Esposito, a longtime apologist for radical Islam and an example of how Arab funding can have a malign impact on campus and beyond. He was the founding director of the Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU).

As noted in *The Arab Lobby*, "Prospective Jewish donors to Georgetown might ask why it is not a center for Muslim-Christian-*Jewish* understanding, but Jews aside, other donors might wonder why a Jesuit university is accepting funding for such a center from a government that does not allow the practice of Christianity."[50]

Esposito's view on Jewish-Muslim understanding was revealed when he posted on his Facebook page a link to a petition by American Muslims objecting to an initiative "to build relationships of understanding, respect, and trust between North American Muslim and Jewish communities." They called it a "betrayal of the Palestinian people."[51]

Frequently cited for his expertise on Islam, Esposito said before 9/11, "Bin Laden is the best thing to come along, if you are an intelligence officer, if you are an authoritarian regime, or if you want to paint Islamist activism as a threat."[52]

Esposito is a BDS advocate (as are several other Walsh professors), a promotor of the canard comparing Israel to Afrikaner South Africa, and a virulent critic of Israel's war with Hamas. Continuing his pattern of defending Islamists, he reposted on X, "Hamas is not ISIS."[53] On October 6, he reposted a tweet about Israeli settlers but said nothing the next day after the Hamas massacre.

Eight days after the Hamas massacre, Esposito signed a warning, along with four other Walsh professors that Israel may engage in genocide.[54] Eleven days after 10/7, he joined 20 Walsh professors from Georgetown Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine (FSJP) who signed a statement calling on the university to demand a ceasefire, mentioning sympathy for all victims, Palestinian and Israeli, but nothing about Hamas, the massacre, or the hostages. It repeats the South Africa comparison, said Israeli politicians bragged about "the atrocities they plan to commit" and deceitfully claimed students and faculty expressing opposition to "Israeli war crimes and

mourning the dead are being silenced."[55] Esposito was also one of at least 22 Walsh professors from FSJP who wrote to Georgetown's president, calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and demanding "a halt to the grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law in the Gaza Strip."[56]

Nine years before the Hamas slaughter, a half dozen Walsh faculty (and one emeritus) signed a statement accusing Israel of, among other things, "rationing Palestinian calorie intake at just above subsistence levels," and "massacres" in Gaza. It also called for the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes, the end of Israel's "colonization" of "Arab lands" occupied in June 1967, and recognition of the rights of Israeli Arabs.[57]

Also, long before October 7, Nader Hashemi, the current Director of the ACMCU, called for a boycott of Israel and compared it to South Africa's former regime. He is also a Hamas apologist. In 2018, he posted these tweets: "Which reminds me, please no more lectures about Hamas when Israeli fascists are in power"[58] and "Hamas changes its strategy and looks to Mandela/Gandhi and MLK for inspiration."[59] In 2021, he tweeted: "Don't talk to me about Hamas unless u r willing to talk about the moral equivalent of Hamas on the Israeli side who form a core part of Bibi's coalition. Key difference: we ban Hamas while we arm/support their Israeli counterparts."[60] Hashemi referred to Israel's war on Hamas as "genocide,"[61] and complained that feminists weren't speaking up for Gaza's women,[62] while failing to condemn Hamas's sexual abuse of Israeli women during and after the October 7 massacre.

Gözde Güran signed the Sociologists in Solidarity with Gaza and the Palestinian People statement, which condemns the latest violence by "the Israeli regime," makes false statements about Israel's use of white phosphorus, and accuses Israel of "genocide." Its only reference to the October 7 massacre was to deride Israel for "claiming its actions are a justifiable response."[63]

In defending the boycott of Israel, the Director of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Fida Adely (who holds a chair named after an ambassador for the virulently anti-Israel Arab League), referred to the need to "end decades of occupation and repression of Palestinian human rights" and criticized dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians as marginalizing Palestinians.[64] She participated in a teaching session on "The Unending War on the Children of Gaza."[65]

Jonathan Brown, the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Chair of Islamic Civilization, is another BDS supporter who says, "All the Arabs were 'cleansed' from what used to be [and still is] Yafa. Referring to the death of a Palestinian killed by Israeli troops, he tweeted, "What never gave them a chance is the Israeli apartheid occupation."[66] At a symposium, he said, "The problem is that the Israeli political creature, the Israeli political establishment, has not told Jews in Israel that they are not allowed to take stuff that doesn't belong to them, and that is, I think, a fundamental problem… If you can tell people that your religious belief does not give you the right to take the possessions of someone else."[67] On March 21, 2024, he tweeted, "Israeli security forces are lunatics. Israel is insanely racist."[68]

Osama Abi-Mershed, Director of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), supports BDS. He has pledged "not to collaborate on projects and events involving Israeli academic institutions."[69] He signed another statement in 2014 accusing Israel in its counterterror operation against Hamas of "disproportionate harm" and "war crimes," and called for the suspension of U.S. aid to Israel.[70]

Marwa Daoudy, Associate Professor and Chair of Arab Studies came up with a novel attack on Israel, accusing it of "ecocide"[71] and "cultural genocide."[72] She derides "Biden's complete and unconditional surrender to Israel" and repeats the falsehood about Israel stealing water from Palestinians for the benefit of "illegal settlers."[73] She called the speech by South Africa's Foreign Minister accusing Israel of behaving like Afrikaner South Africa "beautiful" and repeated his statement, "'Palestinians are denied the right to exist as human

beings.'"[74] She said she signed a letter (signatories are missing) to Georgetown's president protesting his statement condemning the Hamas massacre because it did not mention the Palestinians.[75]

Diplomats can also get an education from Georgetown University in Qatar, initially called Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar. It's an odd location for a Jesuit school that is supposed to be rooted in Christian values, given Qatar's support for Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. In 2014, the university received $59.5 million from Qatar to build the campus.[76]

A former employee who asked to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation said the Qatar Foundation pays a lumpsum yearly to the Georgetown campus, with some of the funding going to the D.C. campus as a "branding fee." The source said, "There is no free speech at the Georgetown Qatar campus."

In 2017, a graduate student researching human rights and migrant labor in the Middle East was denied a visa to attend the school.[77] As an undergraduate, she criticized the treatment of workers constructing the Georgetown campus in Doha. The following year, the Qatar campus canceled a debate about the portrayal of God as a woman after a furor erupted when it was publicized.[78] The university said it was a process issue but admitted it must abide by Qatari law, which might have considered the subject blasphemy. Such restrictions on free speech at the Washington, DC, campus have earned the university the "Lifetime Censorship Award" from the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE).[79]

Among the faculty is Palestinian American historian Abdullah Al-Arian, who said there's a growing consensus that Israel is committing "genocide" in Gaza and wants to pursue an "ethnic cleansing campaign on the order of the Nakba" but is being forced to settle for reducing Gaza's territory "through unprecedented destruction and a long-term military occupation." He uses standard anti-Semitic jargon like "settler-colonial" state to describe Israel but couches much of his opinion by referring to what others say.[80]

Law professor Noha Aboueldaha refers to "Israel's brutal military assaults," "atrocities," and the need "to dismantle the system of dehumanization of Palestinians."[81] She reposts tweets attacking Israel as well as her own, accusing Israel of "collective punishment."[82] She misquotes Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant in an effort to prove Israel's "genocidal intent, crimes against humanity, and war crimes."[83]

Ian Almond, a professor of World Literature, said on LinkedIn, "I'm sorry, but I don't blame Hamas for this. If you let power do whatever it wants without ever checking or rebuking it, this is where you end up."[84] He claimed before October 7, Palestinians made "non-violent" approaches to the border where they were "met with violence – Israeli snipers killed over 200 of these peaceful protesters."[85] He found it "disturbing to see pictures of any women, Israeli or Palestinian, being dragged off by a crowd of jeering men," ignoring that no Palestinian women were treated that way.[86]

Yehia A Mohamed, Associate Professor of Arabic at GU-Q, wrote numerous Facebook posts such as "Half a year has passed since the extermination war in Gaza and the resistance has not given up or been defeated,"[87] "I have always been with the Palestinian resistance, regardless of the ideologies of each team, whether this team is Fatah, the Front, Hamas, or Jihad,"[88] and "The Biden and Blinken administration bears more responsibility for the genocide and war crimes in Gaza than the leaders of the terrorist occupying state."[89]

Historian Trish Kahle is a member of FSJP and a signatory to their ceasefire letter along with Al-Arian and Aboueldaha. While still a graduate student at the University of Chicago, she wrote columns for SocialistWorker.org. In one, Kahle said Israel "mercilessly slaughtered" 1,000 Palestinians "in the open-air prison that is the Gaza Strip" and denounced the university's investment in Israel.[90] After the October 7th

massacre, she signed a statement (along with 1,200 "scholars") by "Feminists For a Free Palestine" accusing Israel of, among other things, ethnic cleansing, "pinkwashing to justify genocide," and colonialism.[91]

A Backdoor for Funders?

Meanwhile, gone unnoticed is Qatar's backdoor to universities, the Arab Center Washington DC (ACW), which is affiliated with the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies in Doha.[92]

The ACW describes itself as "a nonprofit, independent and nonpartisan research organization dedicated to furthering the political, economic and social understanding of the Arab world in the United States and to providing insight on U.S. policies and interests in the Middle East."

It relies on tax-deductible contributions from "individual supporters, organizations, foundations and corporations." However, according to its tax return, all but $900 of its $2,262,150 in donations came from the center in Qatar.[93]

A hint of its orientation can be found in two events: "Gaza and the Crime of Genocide: Legal and Political Dimensions of Accountability" and "Repression of Palestine Activism amid the War on Gaza."

Khalil E. Jahshan, the executive director and a veteran of several Arab lobby groups, has said the "clearest political message" of Hamas's attack on Israel was "the one addressed to the 'Camp of Normalizers'—be they Israeli, Arab, Americans or Europeans—that their plans to forge a 'New Middle East' without Palestine shall not pass unopposed."

He also tweeted: "Top #Biden adviser and confidant Brett #McGurk is obsessed with rewarding #Israel for its #genocidal war in #Gaza by furthering the #Trump-era cash-&-carry #normalization deal between #Saudi_Arabia & Israel at the expense of #Palestinian national rights."

The center has 14 academic advisers, 13 are professors from universities such as Georgetown, George Washington, Maryland, and Princeton. The website does not indicate whether any members are paid.

Two members of the Walsh Faculty at Georgetown were previously mentioned: Osama Abi-Mershed and Marwa Daoudy.

Another adviser, Columbia University professor Hamid Dabashi, refers to ISIS as "murderous thugs" and says, "Their Israeli counterparts meanwhile conquered parts of Syria and declared it part of their Zionist settler colony." Dabashi does see one difference – "ISIS does not have a platoon of clean shaven and well coiffured [sic] columnists at the New York Times propagating the cause of the terrorist outfit as the Zionists columnists do on a regular basis."[94]

The University of Maryland's Shibley Telhami is less bellicose. A critic of Israel, he is best known for producing widely quoted surveys related to Israel with questions written to elicit negative responses toward Israel.[95] Following the October 7 massacre, Telhami posted tweets such as "the Israeli army has weaponized humanitarian measures such as 'evacuation orders', 'safe routes' & 'safe zones' to support their military operations & facilitate the mass displacement of Palestinians."[96]

Another adviser is retired USC professor Laurie Brand, a former president of MESA and now chair of its Committee on Academic Freedom, which devotes much of its attention to criticism of Israel and defense of anti-Semitic rhetoric. In its post-October 7 letter to universities, MESA denied that anti-Zionism is a form of anti-Semitism. While expressing heartbreak over the loss of Israeli and Palestinian lives, the letter said nothing about the Hamas massacre that created the toxic campus environment in which many Jewish students feel under

siege.[97] She is indignant that Israel's detractors are silenced while freely expressing criticism and supporting the boycott of Israel which undermines academic freedom.

George Washington University history professor Dina Khoury is another former MESA president who supports BDS and has condemned Israel in a prior Gaza conflict for its actions to defend its citizens.[98]

Sheila Carapico, a professor of political science and international studies at the University of Richmond, is another BDS supporter and a consultant to Human Rights Watch.[99] She authored an article complaining about Saudi Arabia bullying Qatar.[100]

Another BDS supporter is Amaney Jamal, the Edwards S. Sanford Professor of Politics at Princeton.[101]

ACW also has 18 research fellows, including Dana El Kurd, an assistant professor at the University of Richmond who wrote an op-ed in the *Washington Post* assailing the normalization of relations between Israel and the Gulf states, claiming that rather than advancing peace, Israel is giving the Arab regimes tools to solidify their authoritarian rule. She claims the Palestinian issue is the "root cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict" and suggested that the Abraham Accords emboldened Israel to annex Palestinian territory, ignoring that Israel gave up a plan to exercise sovereignty to achieve the agreement with the Gulf states.[102]

One member of the ACW board is Mohammed Abu Nimer, director of the Peacebuilding and Development Institute at American University. Hamas, he says, has "engaged in the fight against the Israeli occupation since 1987"; that is, two years after every Israeli was withdrawn.[103] He also repeats the canard that Hamas changed its charter, does not consider Jews its enemy, and no longer seeks Israel's destruction.[104] The man who received the 2023 Distinguished Scholar Award for his "groundbreaking work in interreligious dialogue and faith-based peacebuilding" compares Israel to Afrikaner South Africa and accused Israel of "ethnic cleansing" and preparing for a "genocide" in Gaza.[105]

Another board member is Laurie King, an anthropology professor at Georgetown who was a co-founder of the virulently anti-Israel website Electronic Intifada. She has compared Israel to Afrikaner South Africa and called for it to be boycotted. She falsely accuses Israel of "ethnic cleansing," and justifies the Hamas massacre as a response to Israel controlling "virtually all aspects of life" for Palestinians even though Israel withdrew from Gaza and Hamas controlled the lives of those living there. Unsurprisingly, she objects to individuals who have expressed anti-Semitic sentiments being called out for anti-Semitism.[106]

The question that is challenging to answer given lack of transparency is whether the professors associated with ACW spread propaganda because they get paid or are recruited by Qatar because they are anti-Israel. If there is no financial or professional benefit, why associate with Qatar?

Foreign Students

Given the high percentage of contributions for tuition and fees, many unreported and unidentified gifts may be for similar purposes. However, it is also possible that they are for more political purposes, which is why they are not reported.

Data is also missing. In previous reports, for example, George Mason divulged receiving $58.9 million starting in 2012 from the Embassy of Saudi Arabia for scholarships.[107] No purpose was recorded for any of the contributions in the most recent report.

Since Arab funders have spent $2.1 billion on tuition, universities have good reason to welcome international students. Their governments' generosity no doubt motivates many Arab students to take advantage of the

American education system. In 2022/23, for example, more than 31,000 students came from 10 Arab countries and the Palestinian Authority. This is a tiny fraction (3%) of the more than one million international students.

Saudis are the tenth-largest group of international students on U.S. campuses (nearly 16,000) but their numbers have been declining.[108] In 2012, more than 70,000 Saudis were studying in the U.S.[109] Still, two-thirds of Arab donations and 29% of all tuition funding come from Saudi Arabia. While Qatar is the largest donor to universities, it has spent only $7.1 million on tuition compared to $609 million by the Saudis.

We don't know which universities all these students attend. Based on the DoE information on tuition donations, 119 different universities have had students from Arab nations and the Palestinian Authority since 2021. Some recipients of multiple tuition donations include Brown, Colorado State, Columbia, Pace University, Penn State, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Wisconsin. By far, however, the most donations (1,266 or 57%) were made to the University of Alabama, primarily for Saudi students.

Notice the choice of universities does not suggest Arab countries are trying to seed the elite institutions with provocateurs. As noted earlier, the largest donation went to the University of Missouri Kansas City, and the Saudis' most significant contribution was to the University of Idaho. Consider that out-of-state tuition at Missouri is about $28,000. That means the funds contributed by Kuwait could be used for 10,142 students to spend one year in Kansas City or more than 2,500 to complete a four-year degree. According to the State Department, more than 15,000 Kuwaitis are studying in the United States.[110]

The thousands of Arab students here to study are not necessarily interested in campus politics; they are sent because of a shortage of skilled labor. They typically study science, engineering, information technology, medicine, and other areas that will help them professionally and serve the needs of their countries. Saudi Arabia explicitly forbids its students from engaging in political or religious discussions or speaking to the media.[111] Hence, despite many Saudi students on campus, it is unlikely they were responsible for the University of Alabama at Birmingham Student Government (USGA) Senate adopting a resolution authored by the president of the Muslim Student Association in February 2024 that "condemns the ongoing occupation, settler colonialism, apartheid, ethnic cleansing of Palestinians since 1948" and the "plausible genocide of Gaza since 2023."[112]

In the past, there were two main organizations of Arab students, the Organization of Arab Students (OAS) and the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS), that received funding from Arab governments and were active detractors of Israel on campus. GUPS, for example, became a student arm of the PLO's Palestinian National Council and the principal Arab lobby organization on American campuses in the 1970s and 80s, sponsoring speaking tours by anti-Israel speakers and organizing protests and other activities. Neither OAS nor GUPS exists today.

Students from Arab countries who are hostile toward Israel could potentially affect the atmosphere if they became active in the BDS movement and other anti-Semitic, anti-Israel campaigns.

Evidence for such involvement does exist. For example, on November 9, 2023, MIT students protested Israel's war with Hamas in a location where they were not permitted. University President Sally Kornbluth had previously said that students engaged in unsanctioned protests could be expelled; however, she did not enforce that policy. "Because we later heard serious concerns about collateral consequences for the students, such as visa issues," Kornbluth admitted, "we have decided, as an interim action, that the students who remained after the deadline will be suspended from non-academic campus activities." Rather than protect Jewish students targeted by protestors, Kornbluth chose to defend their antagonists to spare them from deportation.[113]

While critics fear that Arab students are having a negative influence on their peers, the opposite may also be true. Introducing students from the Middle East to American democratic values could have a salutary effect on them. Hisham Muhyi al-Nazer, who served as Saudi Minister of Planning, got a B.A. and M.A. at UCLA in the 1950s. He said, "I don't know any Saudi Arab who has studied in the United States who has come back with a feeling against it."[114]

Some members of Congress have asked the Biden administration to investigate whether foreign nationals may be violating the law by their participation in protests supporting Hamas. Students may have their visas revoked and be deported if they endorse or espouse terrorist activity or persuade others to do so.[115]

Some Arab students, including American citizens, are BDS advocates and critics of Israel. Their presence on campus creates the potential for disruption. Further investigation is necessary to ascertain the extent to which foreign students participate in political activities and are incentivized to be activists.

What's Missing?

Due to lax compliance and enforcement in the past, universities have yet to report many of the gifts they have received from foreign sources or only disclosed partial amounts. Three of the 17 categories in the October 2023 report (Changes Due To Foreign Source Owner, Foreign Source Ownership Date, and Foreign Source Owner Name) are blank. Many dates when donations were made are now omitted.

Under the Trump administration, the department cracked down, and some universities disclosed previously unreported gifts and contracts. Still, the Network Contagion Research Institute reported that for the period 2014-2019, more than $4 billion in donations from Qatar, Saudia Arabia, and the UAE were undocumented.[116] Previously, ISGAP reported that at least $3.4 billion in gifts/contracts were not reported between 1986 and 2018. The lion's share of that came from the Qatar Foundation. According to ISGAP, six U.S. universities with campuses in Doha received $4,879,315,375 from the foundation but reported only about 60% of that amount – $1,905,613,216 – meaning nearly $3 billion was not disclosed.[117]

Based on university announcements and press reports, it is possible to identify examples of unreported donations. For instance, in 1993, Saudi Arabia supported the creation of two chairs, one for molecular medicine and another for oncology and pediatrics at Johns Hopkins.[118] The same year, Saudi King Fahd gave Harvard $5 million for the King Fahd Chair for Islamic Studies in 1993.[119]

The Sultan Endowment for Arab Studies was established in 1998 at Berkeley with a $5 million gift from the Prince Sultan Charity Foundation.[120] According to the university, "The Sultan Program supports teaching, research, and public outreach on topics related to the Arab and Arab-Islamic world, with the overarching goal of promoting a deeper understanding of this important region."[121]

Table 4: Undocumented Funding Sources[122]
(2014-2019)

Qatar	$2,706,240,869
Saudi Arabia	$1,065,205,930
United Arab Emirates	$431,396,357

Palestinian billionaire Hasib Sabbagh, the original funder of the Center of Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown, funded the Hasib Sabbagh Professorship of Cell Biology at Harvard in 1998. He also endowed the Diana Tamari Sabbagh Chair in Middle Eastern Studies at Rice (he also endowed a chair at the Council on Foreign Relations).[123] The chair at Rice now appears to have been converted to a fellowship held by Samih Al-

Abid, who promulgates the canard comparing Israel to Afrikaner South Africa and accuses Israel of creating "Bantustan-like communities" while omitting any mention of terrorism in his analysis of the failure of the Oslo Accords.[124]

In 1999, the government and the people of Oman funded the Sultan of Oman Professorship in International Relations at Harvard. The size of the gift was not reported that year. The Sultan was described in a study of Harvard professorships as a "courageous supporter of the Camp David peace accords and an active participant in the search for peace in the Middle East."[125] The aforementioned Tarek Masoud holds the chair.

In 2001, Saudi businessman Khalid al-Turki added $500,000 to the $1.5 million he had already given to establish the contemporary Arab studies program at Harvard. The University also hosted the H. E. Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani (the former head of OPEC, who led the campaign to turn the oil weapon against the West) Islamic Legal Studies Fund and the Bakr M. Binladin [Osama's brother] Visiting Scholars Fund. The commemorative book published on the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies noted that the federal government, Harvard, and Aramco funded the Center's outreach program.[126]

Also in 2001, Cornell announced the creation of the Weill Medical College of Cornell University in Qatar. The emirate agreed to spend $750 million on the school over 11 years, including a fee to Cornell that was not disclosed.[127] According to ISGAP, Cornell received some $64 million through 2018 but did not report nearly $1.4 billion (by far the largest share of unreported funds from the Qatari campuses).[128] Cornell did report $151 million as the annual budget for the Weill College and two other restricted contracts worth a total of $286 million to establish and support the college. The report noted, "In some circumstances admission preference may be given to Qatar citizens."

Georgia Tech has received more than $22 million from Saudi Arabia. About $7.5 million, none of which is identified in the DoE report, came from Aramco. The money is used to offer employees of the oil company the opportunity to study information security and cybersecurity.[129]

The DoE reports did not include $20 million gifts to Harvard and Georgetown from anti-Zionist Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal in 2005. This is the person whose offer of money to victims of 9/11 was rejected by New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani because of the prince's suggestion that America rethink its support of Israel.

Harvard received the money for "a university-wide program with an endowed chair, three senior professorships, and support for research, tuition, fees, and stipends for graduate students" and "an Islamic Heritage Project designed to preserve and digitize historically significant Islamic materials and make the resulting images available via the Internet." The Georgetown funds went to expand its Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (the center was created in 1993 with $6.5 million from a foundation of Arab businessmen led by Christian Arab Hasib Sabbagh).[130]

Georgetown did report other gifts from the prince of $4 million (2005), $3 million (2006), $4 million (2007), $5 million (2009), and $6 million (2010). It must be clarified if those payments were related to the $20 million gift or separate donations.

In 2003, Columbia resisted complying with federal and state requirements to report foreign gifts. The university took money from the United Arab Emirates and others to endow a chair in Middle East studies named after Edward Said, a vehement anti-Zionist, thereby institutionalizing an anti-Israel faculty position on the campus. Predictably, the chair was filled by an outspoken critic of Israel, former Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) spokesman Rashid Khalidi. For many months, efforts were made to learn where the estimated $4 million

had come from for the position, but the university refused to disclose the information until bad publicity forced it to reveal the names of the donors.[131]

In 2005, Harvard also received $5 million from Prince Talal for postgraduate education and research at the Harvard Medical School Dubai Center.[132]

In 2010, Columbia established a Center for Palestine Studies, which Khalidi, the center's co-director, said was funded through the university's Middle East Institute.[133] According to its 2018-2019 Annual Report, the center received funding from 18 donors, none of which were identified as foreign gifts.[134] Subsequent reports did not provide any information about donors.[135]

Because it fell below the $250,000 threshold, Harvard did not have to report a 2011 gift of $150,000 from the Palestinian Monetary Authority to establish an annual graduate public service fellowship to support a student from the "occupied Palestinian territories" for three years. Harvard did acknowledge individual donations of unspecified amounts from Palestinian businessman Bashar Masri to fund fellowships for Palestinian students attending the school. These may have also been below the required threshold for informing the DoE as they do not appear in the department's reports. In the 2022 report, Harvard acknowledged three unspecified contributions from a giftor(s) in "Palestine" of $275,00 in 2017, $775,000 in 2018, and $525,000 in 2019. Those donations appear to have been erroneously attributed to Panama in the 2023 report.

In 2012, MIT signed a memorandum of understanding to expand the research and education partnership between MIT and Saudi Aramco.[136] The amount of money involved was not disclosed, but MIT did report receiving more than $4 million from Aramco from 2014-2017.

The same year, the Qatar Foundation collaborated with the Institute for Global Law and Policy at Harvard Law School to establish a graduate law school at Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Doha.[137] The DoE report shows a $1 million donation from Qatar that year, but no further details.

Johns Hopkins received "an undisclosed but 'transformational' amount" from the UAE to build a hospital building that opened in 2012. In 2018, the UAE gave $50 million to Johns Hopkins Medicine to create the Sheikh Khalifa Stroke Institute to transform treatment for stroke patients across the globe.[138]

Cornell, Stanford, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Texas at Austin all entered lucrative relationships with King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) worth $25 million or more over five years.[139]

Yale did not report the $10 million it received in 2015 from Saudi businessman Sheikh Kamel for the Abdallah S. Kamel Center for the Study of Islamic Law and Civilization at Yale Law School.[140]

In 2015, the Al Jalila Foundation partnered with Harvard Medical School "to cultivate the next generation of local medical talent in line with the vision to position the UAE at the forefront of medical innovation." The foundation was created by the ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The foundation also provided funds to NYU Abu Dhabi and research fellowships from 2014 until at least 2018 to the University of Pennsylvania, the Cleveland Clinic, and the University of Alabama Birmingham.[141] No reports list this foundation as a donor to any of these universities.

In 2016, the University of New Haven signed an agreement to assist King Fahd Security College in Riyadh in developing a bachelor's program in security studies.[142] It did not report any funding from Saudi Arabia until 2019 when it recorded only one contract for $1.3 million and two monetary gifts totaling $7.8 million.

In 2016, Babson Global, a wholly owned subsidiary of Babson College, entered a partnership with Lockheed Martin, Emaar (a Saudi real estate firm), and Prince Mohammad bin Salman's MiSK Foundation to establish the Prince Mohammad bin Salman College of Business and Entrepreneurship. The college was established to promote the crown prince's agenda of increased economic growth, tourism, and social mobility in Saudi Arabia. Babson Global anticipates receiving about $52.2 million over a 10-year period that began in 2014.[143] In 2022, Babson reported receiving only $136,100 in 2018 and $140,500 in 2019. The 2023 report does not specify whether funding was for this project but lists 20 donations since 2014 worth more than $2.9 million.

In 2017, Harvard announced that Prince Turki bin Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud was providing an undisclosed amount for the Project on Saudi and Gulf Cooperation Council Security at the Kennedy School of Government. The school also presumably receives funding for the Evidence of Policy Design initiative with the Saudi Ministry of Labor. The Belfer Center also received the prince's funding for its Project on Saudi and Gulf Cooperation Council Security. Another undisclosed amount comes from the MiSK Foundation for a summer leadership development course. According to Shera Avi-Yonah, "While Harvard websites make no mention of the group, MiSK's site lists the university as an official partner.[144]

Many foreign gifts are consulting contracts. Michael Sokolove noted "at least 25 universities have contracts with Aramco; Sabic, the petrochemical company; or the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology, a government research facility in Riyadh." These are apolitical, focused, Sokolove says, on "technical aspects of oil and natural gas extraction and processing."[145]

In 2018, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman visited Boston. Several new agreements between Saudi Arabia and MIT were announced.[146] No funding was mentioned. Still, Sokolove said the total was $23 million.[147] This has yet to be reported ($5.4 million in unidentified monetary gifts from Saudi Arabia were reported in 2018). These were the new projects:

- A collaborative agreement between Saudi Aramco and MIT focused on global energy, climate, environmental sciences, and the transformation and sustainable development of the energy sector.
- An extension of the Ibn Khaldun Fellowship program at MIT with the support of King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST). The program brings post-doctoral Saudi women scientists and engineers to MIT to conduct research and advance as leaders in their respective fields.
- A collaborative agreement between SABIC and MIT that focuses on designing and testing a novel reactor for the combustion pyrolysis of methane.
- A collaborative agreement between KACST and MIT will further support the Center of Complex Engineering Systems in advancing interdisciplinary research in complex engineering systems such as air and rail transportation systems, urban development, and improving electrical grid and water distribution networks.
- A collaborative agreement between KACST and Brigham and Women's Hospital for the Center of Excellence for Biomedicine to focus on three critical medical research projects.
- A collaborative agreement between King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), Research Products Development Company RPDC, and Saudi VAX. This agreement will establish the Saudi Vaccine and Bio-manufacturing Center at KAUST.

Bin Salman's foundation already was a member of MIT's Media Lab, which focuses on computing and technology and requires a commitment of at least $250,000 annually.[148] These contributions are either not reported or, if they are, not attributed to Bin Salman's MiSK Foundation or the prince.

In 2020, the Munib and Angela Masri Foundation committed to a multi-million-dollar gift to the University of Texas at Austin to create a century-long endowment at the University's Jackson School of Geosciences. Since

the DoE does not publish information about donors, it is unknown if any funds have been received or reported.[149]

The Lebanon-based Hariri Foundation, created by the former Lebanese prime minister, has given several gifts to universities through a nonprofit organization set up in the District of Columbia – Hariri Foundation-USA. This setup allows universities to avoid reporting them as foreign gifts (but the foundation must list its grants on U.S. tax returns). In 1992, for example, the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the American University of Beirut began a joint research program on reforming the Lebanese public sector. A year earlier, the foundation endowed the Rafik Hariri Professorship of International Political Economy at Harvard and, in 2009, funded fellowships at the Carr Center for Human Rights. The foundation also has a scholarship program at Boston University and funds high school students to attend a program associated with MIT.[150]

Overstating the Problem of Unreported Funds

The combination of DoE omitting the purpose of donations and funding that goes unreported altogether is concerning. Critics of Arab governments, notably Qatar, assume the money is going for nefarious purposes. However, much of the evidence is to the contrary.

ISGAP has done excellent work identifying unreported funds. Still, its insinuation that countries like Qatar are having a "detrimental influence on U.S. higher education and national security," is not supported by its examples. In a report focused on financial support received by Yale from Qatar, eleven grants are cited as unreported, but there is no reason to believe that any of them impact national security or attitudes toward Israel and Jews.[151]

Six grants were for medical research, including one for a professor of psychiatry to participate in a research project related to risk factors for perinatal depression at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar. Three others are related to oil.

The only political grants were equally benign. One was for a professor who presented "The Rule of Law in Arab Politics," which provided valuable insights into "the relationship between legal frameworks and political transitions in the Arab world…during a time of significant change." Another examined Christian support for regime change in Syria and Egypt.

No grant money is mentioned, but ISGAP also includes two education programs. One involved the partnership between the Yale Jackson School of Global Affairs and the Qatar Foundation on the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE). The second is for the Wise Learner's Voice Program, which is a collaboration between the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies, the Yale Council on Middle East Studies, the Yale Fellowship Program, and the Qatar Foundation to create "an international platform which promotes the education of young leaders.

These cases do not justify the increasing hysteria over foreign funding in general or that of Qatar in particular. Other examples in our report raise legitimate concerns. Furthermore, the DoE's lack of enforcement of reporting regulations and obfuscation of funding purposes creates further suspicions. Nevertheless, reports that fail to demonstrate harmful intent or consequences undermine the argument for restricting foreign funding.

Table 5: Unreported Funds by University and Country of Donor 1981-2020

American University[B]	1984	$5,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Berkeley	11/26/1998	$5,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Berkeley	1998	$2,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Berkeley	2008	$28,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Carnegie Mellon[A]	1986-2018	$122,410,305	QATAR
Cornell[A]	1986-2018	$1,398,144,660	QATAR
Cornell	2008	$25,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
George Washington[D]	2/18/2011	$4,500,000	KUWAIT
Georgetown[A]	1986-2018	$138,597,917	QATAR
Georgetown	12/12/2005	$20,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Georgetown	1993	$6,500,000	PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY
Harvard	1982	$600,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Harvard	1982	$1,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Harvard	12/12/2005	$20,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Harvard	2001	$500,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Harvard	1993	$5,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Harvard	1994	$1,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Harvard	1982?	$1,500,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Harvard	6/20/2005	$5,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Johns Hopkins	2/1/2018	$50,000,000	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MIT	2018	$23,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
New York University	2008	$50,000,000	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Northwestern	1986-2018	-$12,342,876	QATAR
Rice	1996	$1,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Rochester Institute of Technology	2008	$136,000,000	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Stanford	2008	$25,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Texas A&M[A]	1986-2018	$739,424,927	QATAR
University of Arkansas	1994	$20,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
University of Texas Austin[E]	2008	$25,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Virginia Commonwealth[A]	1986-2018	$587,467,226	QATAR
Yale	2015	$10,000,000	SAUDI ARABIA
Total		**$3,444,302,159**	

[A]Source: ISGAP.
[B]AU later said the pledge was not paid.
[C]Estimated.
[D]The chair was created but no report was issued indicating where the remainder of the funds came from.
[E]This amount is mentioned for the program, but UT's share is not specified

Compromising Values

Universities have largely escaped government scrutiny—at least until recently—for fundraising in Arab countries. Universities, revered as bastions of liberalism and academic freedom, have paradoxically found themselves entangled in ethical quandaries regarding their financial relationships with authoritarian regimes. This dilemma epitomizes a concerning prioritization of fundraising over educational principles, a trend observable not only in dealings with Arab nations but also in accepting funds from other serial human rights violators like China, Turkey, and Venezuela.

Critics have raised alarm about the potential consequences of universities establishing campuses in the Gulf region, where they may find themselves compelled to conform to discriminatory laws and cultural norms. For instance, NYU's collaboration with the UAE sparked concerns about the university's alignment with a nation known for human rights abuses and anti-Semitic sentiments. President Sexton seemed unconcerned about problems that might arise for gay students (homosexuality is illegal), Jews (Abu Dhabi was home to a think tank that denied the Holocaust), or Israeli scholars (Israelis were barred from the country before the Abraham Accords). He would only grant that anyone on the NYU Abu Dhabi campus would have to accept the norms of that society. The coordinator of the program from the Abu Dhabi government was blunter, "NYU was aware of our local culture and rules and guidelines," said Mubarak Al Shamesi, "and our policies on Israelis or homosexuality were clearly not a concern for them."[152]

Instances of censorship and reprisal against dissenting voices further illustrate the ethical compromises made by universities for financial gain. The Qatar Foundation's suppression of a Lebanese band with an openly gay singer at Northwestern's Doha campus and the dismissal of a professor at the Qatar campus for expressing pro-Israel views highlight the chilling effect on academic freedom in environments beholden to oppressive regimes.[153]

Few universities have the courage to reject hundreds of thousands, sometimes millions of dollars, offered by Arab donors. When Georgetown received a $750,000 donation from Libya for an endowed chair in 1977, for example, columnist Art Buchwald chastised the university for accepting "blood money from one of the most notorious regimes in the world today." He sardonically suggested the university also consider establishing a "Brezhnev Studies Program in Human Rights or an Idi Amin Chair in Genocide."[154]

After nearly five years of defending the decision to accept the "blood money," university president Rev. Timothy Healy returned the money to Libya with interest because the country supported terrorism. He also returned a $50,000 gift from Iraq, which prompted history professor Hisham Sharabi to call Healy a "Jesuit Zionist."[155]

In the late 1970s, Saudi arms merchant Adnan Khashoggi offered $600,000 to establish a Middle East Studies program at Swarthmore, Haverford, and Bryn Mawr, but the deal fell through after revelations about his alleged involvement in passing bribes on behalf of Northrop.[156] After that scandal blew over, he offered $5 million to American University in Washington, D.C., where he served on AU's board of trustees from 1983 to 1989 (when he was kicked off for failing to attend board meetings).[157]

His 1984 contribution to constructing the Adnan Khashoggi Sports and Convocation Center provoked much criticism, with one professor suggesting they rename the center the Khashoggi Sports and Guerrilla Warfare Center." The decision was defended by university president Richard Berendzen, who, in a book on his life as a university president, had written about being invited to parties at Khashoggi's New York apartment where he met movie stars.[158]

After criminal charges surfaced, the issue of keeping the building's name was debated. Khashoggi was eventually acquitted of all charges, but in 1986, he admitted to advancing $5 million toward the shipment of arms in the Iran-Contra scandal, and the university came under pressure to remove Khashoggi's name from the center. One evening, in the middle of the night, his name was surreptitiously removed, which was later attributed to his failure to pay his financial pledge.[159]

Harvard's Divinity School took $2.5 million in 2000 from Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayan, the funds, Zayed asked for his money back.[160]

Some universities have stood on principle – at least some of the time.

In 1975, Saudi Arabia was asked to finance a $5.5 million teacher-training program, but several schools, including Harvard, would not participate after the Saudis banned Jewish faculty from participating. MIT also lost a $2 million contract to train Saudi teachers because it insisted that Jewish faculty would not be allowed to participate.[161]

The Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities (Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan State, and Minnesota) won a contract to give curricular advice to the University of Riyadh but withdrew after four Jewish professors were denied visas to enter the country. David Johnson, the dean of international studies at Wisconsin, said, "We are not really dependent on an infusion of Arabian funds. Even if we were, this organization is not going to prostitute itself for oil money."[162]

The University of Nevada at Las Vegas turned down Dubai's offer to open a campus because of concerns about human rights.[163] Boston University, Harvard, Michigan State (now closed), and the Rochester Institute of Technology had no such qualms.

Saudis and other Arab donors need not worry; most universities are happy to accept their money.

The murder of Jamal Khashoggi in 2018 served as a stark reminder of the ethical dilemmas facing universities with ties to Saudi Arabia. With rare exceptions, like those mentioned above, universities have escaped scrutiny for accepting funds from heinous regimes. The national attention devoted by the media to Khashoggi's brutal slaying forced recipients of funds from the government and, especially, from the crown prince accused of ordering the assassination, to reconsider the merits of keeping the money. Ethics seems to have played less of a role in universities' decision-making than the potential downside of negative publicity.

Several institutions said they were reviewing their relationship with Saudi Arabia in the wake of the killing, but none seem to have deemed the incident critical enough to cut their ties. Northwestern University, for example, reported receiving nearly $22 million in gifts and contracts from the kingdom. When asked whether the university would reconsider accepting money from the government following the Khashoggi murder, a statement from the university expressed its condolences but said it had "determined that most of the funds received have been to faculty in the form of grants for basic science research. The results of such research will be shared with the world through peer review published journals with the intent of global benefits. Going forward, the university is asking faculty to assess their relationships with Saudi Arabia."[164]

Graduate students wrote an open letter to the president of MIT urging him to sever ties with the Saudi government and condemn its human rights violations:

> We know that you and MIT's leadership initially approached the Institute's partnership with Saudi Arabia with the noblest of intentions. However, at this point, MIT's continued collaboration with the Saudi government sends the message that human rights violations can be overlooked in favor of financial considerations. It assures Mohammad bin Salman (MBS), the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, that MIT will tolerate his present and future transgressions. And it enables the regime to profit from MIT's reputation. This both grants the kingdom impunity and damages MIT's reputation.[165]

MIT reviewed its ties with Saudi Arabia and decided only to end the Media Lab relationship with MiSK. One rationale for accepting Saudi money was that some funders "served as moderating social influences — for example, by employing female engineers and managers." Jonathan King, the editorial board chair of MIT's faculty newsletter, said the small amount of money involved did not justify getting "in bed with murderers and a

government that imprisons its women activists." He asked why MIT would risk its reputation for "chump change."[166]

Since the controversy arose, MIT has reported additional gifts of more than $17 million from Saudi Arabia.

Johns Hopkins is another institution that has been challenged to address the human rights issues in Saudi Arabia. The university has reported nearly $54 million in contributions, many related to health care, from Saudi sources. It partnered with Aramco to run the company's health system, for example, and works with a hospital specializing in ophthalmology. President of Johns Hopkins Medicine International, Pamela Paulk, told the *Baltimore Sun*, "It is not important for us to be involved in politics. Our mission is to provide health care, education, and research."[167]

Peter Danchin, a human rights lawyer, and director of the International and Comparative Law Program at the University of Maryland Carey School of Law, suggested universities can express their views privately or publicly. "The risk is the regime retaliates and threatens to cancel the joint venture," Danchin said. "As a human rights lawyer, I would think that is a risk worth taking. There is a question about complicity. If you are doing business in a country with human rights violations, at some point, there is a moral and ethical question that arises about what you should do."[168]

There has been no announcement that Johns Hopkins will withdraw from Saudi Arabia. On the contrary, it has accepted almost $5 million from the kingdom since the controversy over Khashoggi arose.

No doubt speaking for many universities, Liz Reisberg, an independent consultant and research fellow at Boston College's Center for International Higher Education who has worked as a consultant for Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Education, said responding to the Khashoggi murder could be symbolic, but it would be hypocritical unless universities are prepared to cancel academic relationships with other countries that violate human rights. "If universities withdraw from their international initiatives each time there is a violation of human rights or an act of violence committed by [an] academic partner's government," Reisberg wrote, "soon all international academic engagement would probably come to a screeching halt."[169]

Since there is little awareness of Saudi funding, the risk of taking it is too low to justify returning gifts or hesitating to solicit and accept new ones. Hence, it is not surprising that 150 universities have taken Saudi money since the killing of Khashoggi.

The decision to accept funds from oppressive regimes should not be solely guided by financial incentives but should reflect a commitment to ethical principles and the promotion of justice and equality. As institutions of higher learning, universities have a responsibility to lead by example and prioritize integrity over financial gain, even at the risk of facing backlash or losing potential funding opportunities.

What About Israel?

The Israeli government, individuals, and companies made at least 1,167 donations worth $375 million dating from 2003 (previous reports included one contribution in 2000, 2001, and 2002). As with Arab donations, few from Israel – 10% worth $37 million (9% of the total) – describe their purpose. Only 81 contributions were from the Israeli government. An earlier report identified five grants as coming from the Binational Science Foundation (BSF), which the United States and Israel jointly fund to support basic science research. The latest report lists four BSF awards. Seven others are described as supporting bilateral cooperation by scientists and may also be BSF grants. Six contributions worth $1.8 million came from Israel's Ministry of Defense for unspecified research projects. Other projects are described primarily as research projects or clinical trials.

Five of the six largest contributions ($4-$7 million) from Israel went to Brigham Young University, a Mormon institution (which has a campus in Jerusalem), and the other, $4.5 million, went to Carnegie Mellon. None listed their purpose or were from the government.

Gifts to create centers, programs, and chairs for Israel Studies come from American citizens and foundations, not the government of Israel, so they need not be reported to the DoE. Those investments are made to improve the quantity and quality of Israel-related education and are not aimed at demonizing the Palestinians, other Arab nationals, or anyone else.

What Is the Impact?

The Arab lobby seeks to influence U.S. policy and the next generation of decision-makers by reaching a broad spectrum of students. Aramco's magazine observed that courses "once tailored for diplomats and missionaries now draw students who plan careers in banking, business, law, public health, education and urban studies," and "university 'outreach' programs are developing and providing courses on the Middle East for both high school [K-12] and adult-education programs."[170]

Gifts to American universities are also designed to enhance the image of the Arab states and their rulers. Saudi Arabia, for example, wanted Americans to forget that 15 of the 19 hijackers on 9/11 were Saudi nationals. More recently, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has sought ties with prestigious American universities to promote his image as a progressive leader who is modernizing his country and to offset the negative attention he has received for his alleged role in the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Harvard's Grif Peterson observed that a financial relationship with institutions like MIT and Harvard "allows Mohammed bin Salman to project an image of being a Western-leaning progressive leader" and gives "legitimacy to this growing power base that he's creating."[171]

"I don't think there's any doubt that the Saudis have seen such donations as a way to acquire goodwill, legitimacy and support in U.S. academia," NYU professor Zachary Lockman noted. "And, of course, donors want to ensure that the people filling these chairs and running these programs will be sympathetic to the policies of these countries' regimes, though they cannot always make that happen."[172]

Donors typically are allowed little or no control over how their money is spent. Universities know, however, what they can and cannot say to avoid alienating their donors. Faculty are hired and promoted under these unspoken conditions. Consequently, Arab donors know that positions they fund will be given to academics who share their worldview and are more likely to be anti-Israel and committed to teaching a sanitized version of Islamic and Middle Eastern history. Furthermore, the chances are nil that a candidate will be hired for a position if they are critical of radical Islam or pro-Israel. Young professors sympathetic to Israel often conceal their views for fear of being denied tenure by peers with opposing opinions on Israel.

Not surprisingly, universities deny that foreign gifts influence their policies. Douglas W. Elmendorf, the dean of Harvard's Kennedy School, for example, acknowledged that his school receives Saudi financial support but insisted, "Our principal standards for such work are whether it maintains our tradition of scholarly excellence, whether it can be conducted without donors' attempting to influence the conclusions of our scholarship, and whether it has positive effects on people in the societies where we are engaged." He added, "We believe that our work in Saudi Arabia meets those standards and have made no changes in that work at this point."[173]

In 1982, Khalid al-Turki made a $2 million contribution to establish a professorship in contemporary Arab Studies at Harvard.[174] While universities, especially elite ones that can afford to ignore donors' wishes, maintain they do not allow strings to be attached to gifts, there was reportedly an unwritten understanding that the position would go to Walid Khalidi, a professor affiliated with the PLO who rewrites history to fit the

Palestinian narrative and is a proponent of the specious idea that "the crux and the kernel of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the Palestinian problem."[175] The university denied that the funder will determine the choice for the position. Still, it did go to Khalidi.[176] Edward Keenan, dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) and outgoing director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies said the donation only attracted attention because of a fear of Saudi influence in America.[177]

The current holder of the position is Steven Caton, a BDS advocate who compares Israel to Afrikaner South Africa and signed a vitriolic statement castigating Israel and calling for "Palestinian liberation" and an end to U.S. support for Israel.[178]

Contributions to creating a chair in Palestinian Studies at a prestigious Ivy League school were undoubtedly intended to promote the Palestinian narrative to students expected to become influential. The chair, named after the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, was funded by a coalition of nine different donors, including E. Paul Sorensen, an alumnus who supported a graduate stipend in Palestinian Studies, Basem Salfiti, Rasha Abu Ghazaleh Farouki, and the Nablus-based Munib and Angela Masri Foundation.[179] The other donors were not mentioned in the announcement and a representative of the department would not disclose them.[180]

Munib Masri is a wealthy Palestinian who founded an oil and gas company and the Palestine Development and Investment Company (PADICO). He is a vocal supporter of the BDS movement and contributor to Columbia's Edward Said Chair in Middle Eastern Studies.[181] The foundation gift is not mentioned in the latest DoE report; the amounts and purpose are incorrectly attributed to Panama and England.

When the 2023 report was published, it was unclear whether the position would be a platform for advocating a political agenda. A.J. Caschetta speculated, "Brown's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, its Center for Middle East Studies, and its New Directions in Palestinian Studies research initiative will now collaborate in a synergistic venture, spending money and hiring teachers to indoctrinate students and 'inform the community' about the evils of Israeli colonialism, while stamping its imprimatur on the virtues of the Palestinian cause."[182] It was not a good sign when Beshara Doumani, a supporter of the anti-Semitic BDS campaign, was named the first occupant of the position. Doumani later served (2021-2023) as president of Birzeit University, which is known for the activism of students associated with terror groups such as Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).[183]

A report by the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis (CAMERA) documented troubling elements in courses taught by Doumani. For the course "Palestine versus the Palestinians," for example, he wrote: "The settler-colonial paradigm frames the destruction of Palestine and the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948 as yet another tragic example of a global phenomenon of European capitalist expansion and imperialist conquest that has devastated indigenous populations…"

This is a statement of pure propaganda. Specious references to Israel as a "settler-colonial" state have become a staple of anti-Israel propaganda and anti-Semitic attacks on the Jewish state, as have false accusations of "ethnic cleansing." The establishment of Israel had nothing to do with "capitalist expansion and imperialist conquest." Jews are indigenous to the land and were the ones attacked in 1948 when the Arab states launched an attack to drive them into the sea.

CAMERA examined the syllabi, teachings, and remarks of other Brown professors, such as Ariella Azoulay, who taught a course instructing students to "inquire about practices and modes of whitening the Jews and disrupting the world they shared with Muslims." Abdel Razzaq Takriti taught a "Modern Palestinian History class whose syllabus said, "This course examines the origins of one of the longest running and most significant settler colonial realities in modern history." Adi Ophir, who taught a course related to anti-Semitism, Zionism,

and racism, spoke at an event where he talked about Jewish mobs, what he called "*Kristallnacht* mob[s], who were "thirsty for Palestinian blood."[184]

The titles of events sponsored by the Middle East Studies department indicate the direction of the program at Brown:

- Siri, Is Zionism Settler-Colonialism? The pre and post-10/7 discourse on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in Academia and Activism.
- Responsibility to imagine: A future for Israelis and Palestinians without Zionism.
- The Israeli Working Class and Israel's "Fascist Turn."
- Does International Law Matter? The Israeli Occupation and Beyond.

Princeton's Bernard Lewis observed that Middle East studies programs have been distorted by "a degree of thought control and limitations of freedom of expression without parallel in the Western world since the 18th century." He added, "It seems to me it's a very dangerous situation because it makes any kind of scholarly discussion of Islam, to say the least, dangerous. Islam and Islamic values now have a level of immunity from comment and criticism in the Western world that Christianity has lost, and Judaism never had."[185]

Consider the Center for Middle East Studies program at Harvard. It listed 81 courses for Spring 2024. Of those, three were Hebrew classes, and five related to Israel, only two of which did not include Palestine.[186]

Salma Waheedi, who teaches "Law, Human Rights, and Social Justice in Israel and Palestine," signed a statement supporting Palestinian liberation, implicitly accusing Israel of "racism and colonial violence" and explicitly of "state violence." It also called for an immediate end to U.S. support for Israel.[187] She also signed a letter from legal scholars to President Biden just nine days after the October 7 massacre. It recognized the Hamas atrocities but condemned Israel's "escalating response," which it described as "collective punishment." The subject of Waheedi's course was also the topic of a submission by the International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School to the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. It falsely accused Israel of "the crime of apartheid." Submitted jointly with Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, an NGO that Israel determined was a front for terrorists with several employees who were also members of the PFLP, a U.S. designated terror group.[188]

Another Harvard course, "Learning in Context: Narratives of Displacement and Belonging in Israel/Palestine," is taught by Atalia Omer from the Divinity School. She reposts tweets demonizing Israel from anti-Israel groups like IfNotNow and Jewish Voice for Peace and participated with them on a panel on "Jewish Solidarity with Palestine."[189] She has accused Israel and its supporters of "weaponizing" the Holocaust. She objected to President Biden saying, "Hamas' sole purpose is to kill Jews" following the October 7 massacre. Omer also rejected the "war on Hamas" argument for relying on "cultural and religious reductionism devoid of historical and geopolitical analysis," which is her rationalization for the massacre. She ahistorically says the "root causes" are "turning Gaza into prison, a prolonged occupation, and the original event of the Nakba." She accuses the Israeli government of using the Holocaust "as a justification for another Nakba."[190] Along with four other professors at the Divinity School, Omer signed a statement just a week after October 7 that blamed Israel for the massacre because of its "decades of oppression."[191]

Is the course selection at Harvard and elsewhere a function of Arab funding of Middle East Studies? It is plausible, but we have no specific evidence.

After Georgetown received the $20 million contribution from Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal for its Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) asked whether "the Center has produced any analysis critical of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for example in the fields of human rights, religious freedom, freedom of expression, women's rights, minority rights, protection for foreign workers, due process and the rule of law." He also wanted to know if the Center "has examined Saudi links to extremism and terrorism" or produced any critical study of the "controversial religious textbooks produced by the government of Saudi Arabia that have been cited by the State Department, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and non-governmental groups for propagating extreme intolerance."

These are questions that should be asked today of recipients of Arab funding.

Georgetown president John DeGioia responded to Wolf by extolling the virtues of Prince Talal as "a global business leader and philanthropist." Without answering Wolf's questions directly, DeGioia pointed out that the Center had experts who had written about the extremism of Wahhabism and human rights issues.

To bolster the credibility of the Center, DeGioia revealed the real reason for the Saudis' interest in Georgetown and the ultimate threat it poses: "Our scholars have been called upon not only by the State Department, as you note, but also by Defense, Homeland Security, and FBI officials as well as governments and their agencies in Europe and Asia. In fact, several high-ranking U.S. military officials, prior to assuming roles with the Multi-National Force in Iraq, have sought out faculty with the Center for their expertise on the region."[192]

F. Gregory Gause III, an expert on the Gulf and the head of the international affairs department at Texas A&M University, questioned whether donations by countries like Saudi Arabia have helped their image. "In general," he said, "if what they're trying to do with gifts to universities is buy goodwill, they've failed."[193]

If you look at Gallup's polls on American attitudes toward foreign countries, there is evidence of his view. In 2001, before 9/11, for example, 47% of Americans had a favorable opinion of Saudi Arabia. In the February 2023 survey, the figure was 30%.[194]

While the image of Saudi Arabia may not have improved, this does not mean the Saudis and other Arab donors are not having an impact on students, faculty, decision-makers, and pre-collegiate education. Faculty in political fields who receive funding from these sources can, for example, use their classrooms to advance personal political agendas, be viewed as experts whose opinions are sought by government officials and the media, produce textbooks used by students around the country, train teachers, and develop curricula.

The allure of Arab money can influence universities in other ways as well. *The Arab Lobby* cited the example of Texas A&M effectively censoring the PBS station it managed by canceling the broadcast of *Death of a Princess* in 1980, a film Saudi Arabia was desperate to keep off the airwaves because of its unsympathetic portrayal of the kingdom. University president Jarvis Miller explained that his university didn't want to "risk damaging international relations by showing a movie that reportedly relies on sensationalism and shock value to attack a culture and religion that is foreign to us. As a university, we are attempting at this very time to establish significant new ties with the people who are most offended by this movie."

The University of Houston also prevented the film from being shown on its station. A press release explained that the university understood the "strong and understandable objections by the government of Saudi Arabia at a time when the mounting crisis in the Middle East, our long friendship with the Saudi government and U.S. national interests all point to the need to avoid exacerbating the situation." Several years earlier, the university had signed a lucrative contract to provide instruction for a Saudi princess in Riyadh, and the university received a significant percentage of its donations from oil companies.[195]

Many Arab gifts are for benign or worthy purposes, such as health care and scientific research. For example, MD Anderson, one of the nation's premier research hospitals, was one of the largest funding recipients, reporting two $75 million gifts from the UAE. Another significant gift, $15 million from Qatar, went to Tulane after Hurricane Katrina (Louisiana State University received $3.3 million).[196]

The relatively small number of professors who hold positions in more political fields that are funded by Arab donors and support BDS, such as the chair at Brown in Palestine Studies, can potentially reinforce anti-Israel student activity. The evidence, however, is anecdotal rather than empirical. Most faculty who agitate against Israel do so without Arab funding as motivation.

Table 6: Sources of Funding for Title-VI Programs

Qatar	$667,745,466
Saudi Arabia	$304,553,451
UAE	$219,446,705
Total	**$1,191,745,622**

Ironically, some of the most problematic faculty receive money from the *U.S. government* through the Title VI program to support Middle East Studies Centers. These Centers are often highly politicized and use non-academic materials from sources such as Aramco and the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission.[197] These Centers, which educate high school teachers, are also targeted for investment by Arab funders. ISGAP states these institutions have received nearly $1.2 billion from Gulf nations.

Colleges with Middle East Studies departments that do not receive Title VI funding received another $1.2 billion from those countries.[198]

Influencing Presidents

One way the Arab lobby hopes to influence U.S. Middle East policy is by investing in presidents of the United States. For example, Arab states are significant donors to presidential libraries. While this money is contributed after they leave office, it sends a message to future officeholders that favorable policies have rewards. Money has also gone to academic institutions associated with presidents.

In 1982, former President Jimmy Carter established The Carter Center at Emory University. A critic of Israel as president and an even more virulent detractor after leaving office, Carter's Center has attracted millions of dollars in Arab money. Saudi King Fahd donated $7.6 million to the Center and his nephew, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal, at least $5 million. The Abu Dhabi-based Zayed Center, whose gift to Harvard was returned because of its anti-Semitic history, awarded Carter the $500,000 Zayed International Prize for the Environment in 2001.[199] Among its current list of donors are the Alwaleed Philanthropies, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the Sultanate of Oman, the OPEC Fund for International Development, the Government of the UAE, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Qatar Fund for Development. According to the Center's website, "Many of the Center's experts have taught at Emory, and both faculty and students regularly participate in the Center's work."

One example of how the Arab lobby strategy was applied at the university level involved a relatively obscure southern governor, who asked Saudi Arabia to support his state university. They said no. When that governor, Bill Clinton, became a nominee for president, the Saudis made their first donation to the University of Arkansas – a $3.5 million gift in 1992. One week after he was elected President, Clinton discussed the donation with King Fahd. The university received another $20 million a few weeks after President Clinton's inauguration to

establish the King Fahd Middle East Studies Center.[200] Neither contribution was reported then. "I don't believe that, technically, we have to report it," said Fred Harrison, general counsel for the university system, but he said it would soon do so. The only gifts reported from the king, however, were for $18 million and $312,524 in 1995.[201]

The Center is "dedicated to the study of the modern Middle East." Still, it offers no instruction in Hebrew and only one core course related to Israel: "History of 19th-20th Century Palestine, Zionism and the founding of modern Israel, and the Palestine-Israel conflict in local and regional perspective." A survey course inaccurately refers to the "Arab-Zionist conflict."

The Center became a focus of controversy following the Hamas massacre when the university canceled a panel discussion about the war that was to feature Professor Joel Gordon and Professor Emeritus Ted Swedenburg. Another faculty member, law professor Robert Steinbuch, wrote a series of critical articles about Gordon, Swedenburg, and a third professor from the Center, Mohja Kahf.

Steinbuch quotes Swedenburg as saying, "Jews lived and often thrived throughout the Middle East for centuries, a history that was tragically disrupted with the creation of the state of Israel."[202]

Gordon signed a public statement that mentioned the incursion by "Palestinian armed groups" on October 7, but the rest of the 10-paragraph document attacks Israel and warns of the possibility of it committing genocide.[203] Gordon and Swedenburg signed an open letter to the media incredulously accusing journalists of "uncritical reporting of Israeli violence against the Palestinian people."[204]

Steinbuch noted that after the October 7 massacre, Kahf had a comic strip on her office door that said, "[why is it that] [e]very time you hear this: If we include a Palestinian speaker, then we have to include the Israeli point of view for balance; and yet you rarely hear this ... If we invite an African American speaker, then we have to include the KKK point of view for balance[?]" She also had on her door, "Palestine, from the river to the sea," the expression calling for the replacement of Israel with a Palestinian state and the genocide of Israelis.

In Steinbuch's correspondence with Kahf, she makes several risible remarks, such as European Jews returned to Israel "through violent takeover in 1948" and "colonized" the land of "marginalized Indigenous [Middle Eastern] Jews."[205]

The three professors were also involved in canceling a lecture by noted feminist author and scholar Phyllis Chesler. Kahf claimed Chesler's criticism of Islamic honor killings of women "promote[d] bigotry."[206]

MESA came to the defense of the faculty and called on the university to denounce the "defamation" of the Center and the professors.[207] The association did not object to the cancellation of Chesler.

Does Arab Money Stimulate Anti-Semitism?

ISGAP claimed in its report that Arab funding has "a significant impact on campus attitudes, including the emergence of an anti-Semitic culture and BDS activities at some of the most important universities in the United States." More specifically, ISGAP asserted there is a "direct correlation" between Arab funding and "active presence at those universities of groups that have been proven to foster an aggressive and hostile anti-Semitic atmosphere on campus, such as the Muslim Students Association (MSA) and Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)."

No evidence was presented for these assertions, and the report admitted that no causal link could be established. This is predictable, given the lack of transparency regarding how donations are used. Moreover, in recent years, at least prior to the October 7 massacre, MSAs have been a minor contributor to the atmosphere on campus.

SJPs certainly have been disruptors, but it is unlikely their presence or activities are related to Arab gifts to universities that go to faculty, not students (except for financial aid). Some international students may contribute to the climate on campus, but most of the hostility toward Jews and Israel is generated by American students, including Jews from groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace and IfNotNow.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorists massacred some 1,200 Israelis and took 253 hostages. The attack and the war launched by Israel in response provoked anti-Israel protests at universities nationwide that raised new concerns about the potential role of Arab donations in the upsurge of anti-Semitism on campuses.

In another effort to prove causation, ISGAP and The Network Contagion Research Group (NCRI) published "The Corruption Of The American Mind: How Concealed Foreign Funding Of U.S. Higher Education Predicts Erosion Of Democratic Values And Antisemitic Incidents On Campus."[208] It focused on unreported funds, which begged the question: How can you assess impact if you don't know how the funds were used?

It uniquely tries to prove its hypothesis using quantitative methods. Unfortunately, ignoring qualitative evidence makes the results illogical and inconsistent with documented examples.

The report starts with the conclusion reflected in the title and then tries to contort the data to fit it. The failure to do so is reflected in its equivocations: contributions "may be dedicated to purposes that are controversial at best and malevolent at worst," "secret money may be used to create a generally intolerant intellectual environment on campus," "money might be used to support …faculty who are…antisemitic," and "might be used to support extremist groups on campus" [emphasis added].

Equivocation is necessary because the study doesn't prove any of those suppositions.

NCRI claims approximately $13 billion in contributions (including non-Arab sources) from 2014-2019 were undocumented, but the DoE report they cite said the total was $6.5 billion. Regardless, the critical issue is not the amount but the purpose, and the authors don't have any idea because of the lack of documentation.

The information available about the donations does not support the authors' thesis. Qatar's largest donations, for example, went to Cornell to establish and operate Weill Cornell Medicine in Qatar. Does it seem logical that giving hundreds of millions of dollars to a medical center in Doha would stimulate anti-Semitism in Ithaca?

The campus that has been among the most hostile toward Jews and Israel since October 7 is Columbia. Qatar has made no contributions to that university.

Similarly, the UAE's most significant contributions were to the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Is there a reason to believe these contributed to anti-Semitism in Austin or San Antonio?

The Saudis' most significant donation was to the University of Idaho for tuition and fees for Saudi students. According to Hillel, no Jews are enrolled there. If the Saudis wanted their students to incite anti-Semitism, they wouldn't send them to Idaho, and wouldn't you expect their largest contribution to go to a more influential university?

Also, how do the authors explain that some of the most problematic campuses are not among the largest recipients of foreign donations? For example, Berkeley, which had been ground zero for anti-Israel activity for decades, received $66 million, far less than some universities received in a single year.

Furthermore, the faculty most responsible for anti-Semitism on campus by their support of boycotts and vitriol toward Israel are usually from departments like anthropology, sociology, and gender studies, which are not funded by Arab states.

To try to demonstrate the relationship to anti-Semitism, NCRI does an analysis that mixes incompatible data from the FBI, ADL, and AMCHA. The FBI doesn't trace campus hate crimes, and AMCHA's methodology was problematic.

During the period they examined, the ADL, which has the most consistent data, recorded an average of 139 incidents per year, troubling but hardly the tsunami we're seeing today. Furthermore, looking at "incidents" ignores the qualitative differences. A physical assault is much more severe than a swastika painted on a wall. There were only four assaults in the ADL data. If the only incident on campus during a 10-month school year is the appearance of a swastika, is that an indication of the climate on campus? And, logically, why would you expect vandalism to be related to Arab money?

NCRI does not present a single example of how undocumented money was spent in a way to impact anti-Semitism. A mathematical correlation detached from the real world is of dubious value.

Another problem with the NCRI study is that it didn't stick to examining anti-Semitism but drifted into concerns regarding China and Russia. The authors want to prove that Arab money has a broader impact on "democratic norms of pluralism, tolerance, and freedom." They conclude that "there clearly has been an erosion of democratic norms on campus, self-censorship, censorship by scientists, disinvitations rising, abandonment of free speech/academic freedom by academics."

They provide no examples of it being related to Arab donations. Furthermore, this claim contradicts the supposition that anti-Semitism is being fomented. It is the anti-Semites who have freedom of speech and are typically shielded by academic freedom. Perhaps some anti-Semitic faculty censor themselves, but professors who use "Zionists" as a euphemism for "Jews" are ubiquitous.

Other factors can contribute to the erosion of campus norms. While Arab contributions can corrode values, it happens differently than suggested. Accepting funds from objectionable regimes compromises institutional principles by encouraging the acceptance of discriminatory terms to secure support for campuses in Arab countries. Recipients are also disincentivized to criticize Islam and donor nations to avoid alienating patrons.

Ultimately, after all the quantitative sleight of hand, the authors conclude that the impact on campus is "complex and multiply determined," which is shorthand for not being able to prove their case.

This is unsurprising because the current wave of anti-Semitism has little to do with money. It's a culmination of decades of faculty indoctrination of students with a warped social justice narrative and intersectionality, the ostracism of Israel from Middle East Studies and the paucity of courses treating Israel as a country rather than a conflict zone, the proliferation of Jewish professors whose attitudes mirror those of Israel's detractors; the failure to educate Jews about Israel before college, creating ignorance instead of knowledge and pride in Jewish history; and the willingness of university administrators to tolerate academic malpractice and apply double standards to prejudice against Jews compared to non-Jews.

Compliance Crackdown

College officials were upset by the Trump administration's crackdown while essentially admitting they had ignored their reporting obligation. According to Elizabeth Redden, they believe DoE has "taken an unnecessarily combative, rather than collegial approach to enforcing a law that *no one much paid attention to in the past*" (emphasis added).[209]

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) fought DoE over a requirement to provide the donor's name and address, insisting this would "violate institutions' commitment to donor confidentiality and would preclude institutions from accepting anonymous gifts from foreign sources."[210]

Speaking about the new investigations and rebutting CASE, Trump's Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, said, "This is about transparency." She noted that the department was finding that too many colleges and universities are "underreporting or not reporting at all," and emphasized if they "are accepting foreign money or gifts, their students, donors, and taxpayers deserve to know how much and from whom."[211]

In an undated but subsequent "Response to Public Comments," the department said it would require the name and address of foreign sources but agreed to withhold the information from the public disclosure report.[212]

Interestingly, MESA has "consistently called for open and full disclosure of funding sources for research, conferences and teaching programs, since MESA has been concerned about restrictions on academic freedom that can be imposed – explicitly or implicitly – by funders, whether American or foreign." MESA has opposed funding from the CIA and Department of Defense because such connections create "'dangers for students and scholars by fostering the perception [abroad] of [their] involvement in military or intelligence activities.'" When it comes to Arab funding, however, they are less concerned with transparency and more worried about "blanket accusations that funding by Middle East governments necessarily means that those governments control the academic content of the programs and the hiring of faculty."[213] MESA voted to boycott Israel in 2023.[214]

Conclusion

Given the hostile environment toward Jews prevalent on campuses today, there's a valid concern that it might be fueled by Arab funding. Legitimate fears have also been raised about the broader impact of foreign donations on national security, research, and teaching.

This report has documented the large sums contributed by Arab states, particularly Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, and the incentives they create for universities to avoid alienating their donors. The DoE's lack of documentation seriously impedes an investigation of donations' impact; nevertheless, thanks to media coverage of specific donations, we have demonstrated some of the harmful effects of Arab funding.

We are also challenged by a chicken-and-egg scenario: figuring out if Arab funding shapes faculty perspectives or if it gravitates toward faculty whose views align with the donors. Additionally, linking Arab funding to the tense campus atmosphere concerning Jews and Israel is problematic. This is because they often originate in academic areas largely, if not entirely, unrelated to Israel.

Anti-semitism and hostility toward Israel, particularly from the left, have been present for decades and preceded the spending spree by Arab states. The increased focus on intersectionality, the politicization of the academy by dividing the world between oppressors and oppressed, and the accusation that Jews are beneficiaries of "white privilege" are far greater influences on the campus environment than foreign funding.

Many progressives are anti-Israel *and* disdainful of Arab regimes. One indication of their anti-Semitism is the double standard of condemning Israel but not Saudi Arabia or Qatar. Still, Arab donors have no incentive to support progressives who recognize them as human rights abusers.

Additionally, although certain Arab states, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, have extensive histories of anti-Semitism, and most exhibit hostility toward Israel, their leaders aren't actively seeking to antagonize Americans or Jews. If anything, they're motivated to do the opposite, partly driven by anti-Semitic notions that American Jews wield considerable influence and can sway U.S. Middle East policies in their favor. The Abraham Accords serve as a prime example of how Arab countries' perceptions can shift through normalization of relations with Israel, garnering appreciation from the pro-Israel community as a result.

Still, the lack of transparency by universities enabled by the DoE exacerbates the sense of unease. The Trump administration raised awareness of the danger, but the Biden administration has yet to pursue the investigations with equal vigor. The DoE has worsened the situation by the inadequacy of its public reports.

Given that the overwhelming majority of foreign gifts are reported without any indication of their purpose, it is difficult to assess how they affect America's national security, the atmosphere on campus, and the objectivity of teaching about the Middle East. Advancing beyond anecdotal evidence requires analyzing curricula, syllabi, publications, and programs for evidence of bias and academic malpractice.

Universities may believe the Arab donors expect them to be hostile to Israel even when that might not be the case. Even non-political donations send a message to donees and potential donees that money is available to those who do not criticize Arab regimes. All universities are interested in keeping their patrons happy; hence, even donations for politically innocuous purposes, such as health research, come with an implicit quid pro quo.

Universities can enhance international collaboration by establishing campuses in Arab countries. However, they must prioritize academic freedom when considering partnerships. Transparency and faculty involvement are crucial to ensure these ventures don't compromise core academic principles.

Finally, to address the concerns enumerated in this report, DoE should:

4. **Establish clear guidelines for foreign funding, ensuring national security and academic freedom are protected.**
5. **Require universities to report the names of donors and the purpose of all foreign funding, including previously unreported donations, and make this information available to the public.**
6. **Investigate the impact of Arab funding on teaching, curricula, faculty hiring, outreach programs, academic freedom, and national security.**

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